



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

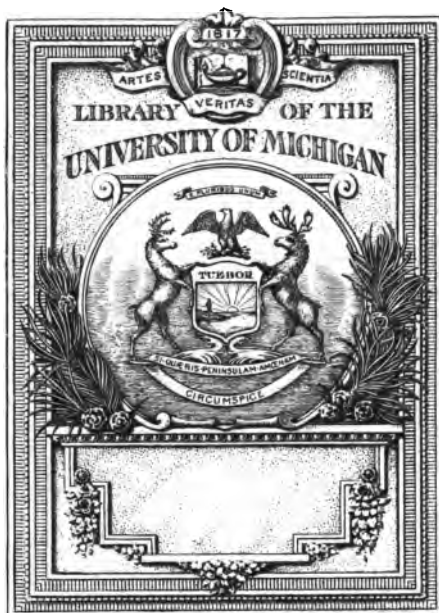
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

357

1920



Coll
1920

1/14/01

**NON
CIRCULATING**

67-

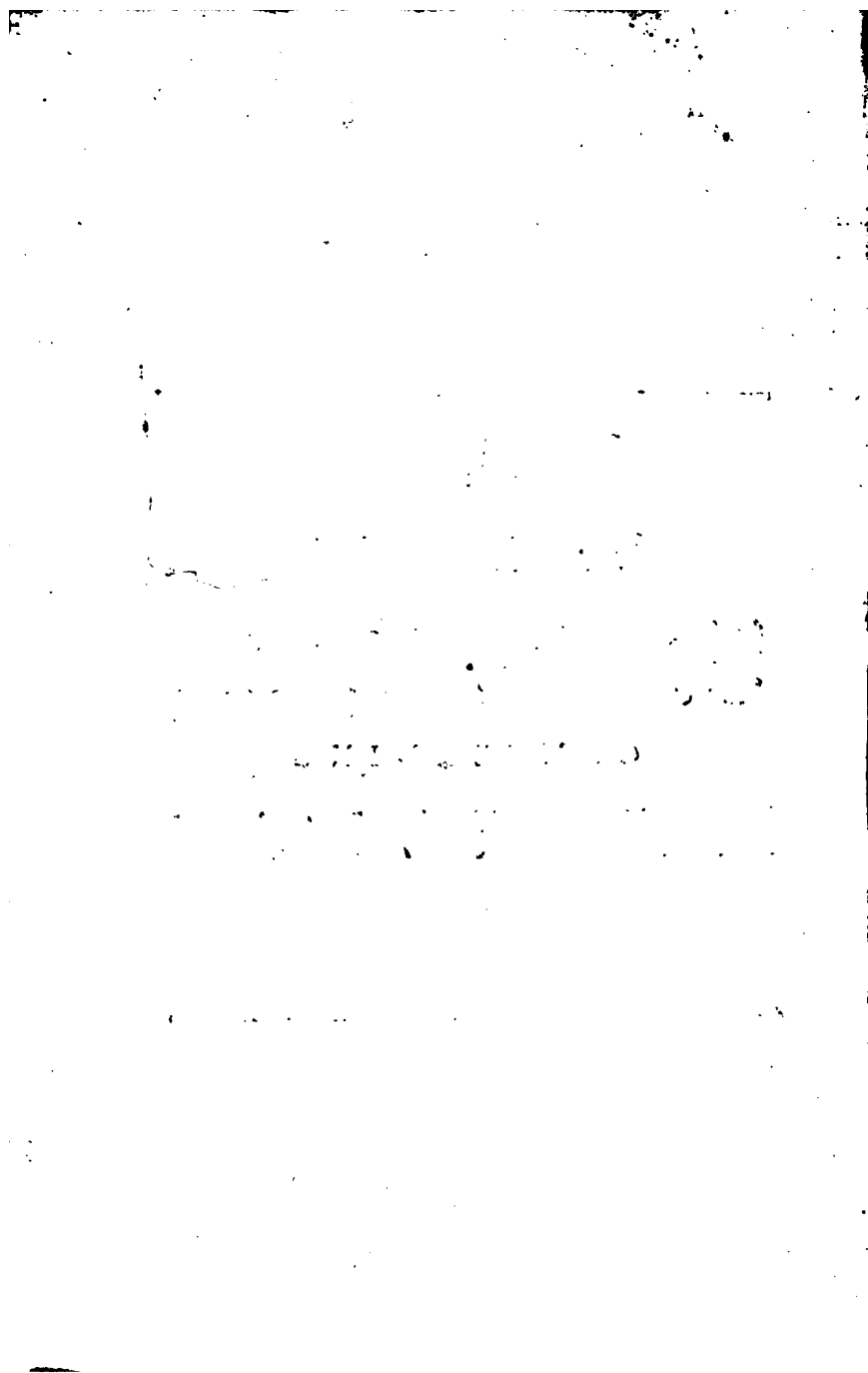
55

Mr. *NORRIS*'s

Practical Treatise

CONCERNING

HUMILITY.



A
Practical Treatise
CONCERNING
HUMILITY.
DESIGN'D FOR
The Furtherance and Improvement
OF THAT
Great Christian Vertue,
BOTH IN
The Minds and Lives of MEN.

By **JOHN NORRIS**, Rector of *Bemerton*
near *Salisbury*.

L O N D O N :

Printed for *S. Manship*, at the *Ship* near the
Royal-Exchange in *Cornhill*, 1707.

EV
4647
H2
N76

Ref. stacks
Muirhead
10-19-51
76224

TO THE READER.

THE great, and at this time but too seasonable Importance of this Subject, and the exceeding little that has been professedly written upon it, make it very necessary to be consider'd. It were only to be wish'd that it had fallen into better Hands, that one of greater Intellectual Abilities, and that had more Health and Leisure to imploy them, had undertaken it, that with those Advantages it might have had at length that Justice done it, which

A 3

might

To the READER.

might have made some amends for its having been hitherto so much neglected.

However, according to my poor Abilities, and as little favourable Circumstances and Opportunities, I have endeavour'd *something* upon it, and that in such a manner, (whatever other Ornamental Accomplishments may be wanting) as I conceiv'd would become a *Christian Discourse*, such as I hope this will be found to be. I have taken some Pains to make it so, and such as it is, I commend it to the Serious and Candid Perusal of the Reader, who I hope, will accept of my good Will and well meant Endeavour.

To the *READER*.

deavours to serve him, though I should not answer his Expectations, or satisfy his Desires upon a Subject, which though Practical, is not the most easie of any in the World to write *well* upon.

That I pretend not to do, but I was willing to be as serviceable as I could to the Interest of Christian Piety, which I cannot but think would be as well serv'd by a Professed Treatise of *Humility*, as by any thing which can be done in the way of Writing. In which undertaking, tho' Mr. *Allen* and Dr. *Pelling* have been before-hand with me, yet I suppose they have not so ex-

A 4

hausted

To the READER.

hausted the Subject, but that there may be room enough for me, if I were capable of filling it. How far I may agree with either of those Authors in any of my Thoughts upon this Occasion, I know not, (having not seen Mr. *Allen's* Book these many Years, and the other never as I know of) nor do I think it material to inquire. Only perhaps it may be convenient upon another account, that the Reader should peruse these Books with this, since 'tis not unlikely that they may supply some Omissions in me, as I also possibly may in them; so that between us all, he may not be unfurnished of a competent Consideration of the matter in hand. I

To the READER.

I heartily wish that mine were such, and that it were now in my Power to present thee with a *good Book*. However, I am sure that I here offer thee a Book upon a *good Subject*, and such wherein every Reader is sure to be concern'd. And because he is so, I have had regard to all sorts of Readers in the Composition of it, hoping that to some of them it may do good. May Almighty God (to whom I humbly offer this Labour of mine for the good of his Church) accompany it with his Grace and Blessing to the Spiritual Advantage and Edification of all Christian People, and to the Glory of his great Name.

Here

To the READER.

Here I thought to have ended, but before I do so, I have one Remark to add, relating to a Passage in the ensuing Treatise concerning *Grace*. Not the Thing, but the *Name*, which (Page the 163. of this Book) I suppose besides Favour, Kindness or good Will, to signify also the assisting Influence of the Holy Spirit inclining us to good ; whereby I would not be understood to exclude the other Sense, (since even those inward assisting Influences are at the same time also *free favours*) but only to enlarge and extend the signification of the word farther, so as with *favour*, which I allow to be the more strict and primary sense

To the *READER*:

sense of it, to include and con-
note the *effects* of that favour,
whereof those Assistencies are
some of the chief, and as such
therefore fit to be comprehen-
ded, as often as the Scope and
Exigence of the place will com-
port with that Sense. Which seems
very reasonable even upon the Sup-
position of the very Learned Per-
son refer'd to P. 164 of this Book.
For if the Grace of God, not-
withstanding that in the more
strict and primary sense it imports
only Favour, be yet allowed not
only to signifie Favour abstract-
ly and at large, but also to sig-
nifie concretely, so as to take in
some of the principal Effects of
that Favour, or certain *special* Fa-
vours

To the READER.

vours as we usually speak, such as the Mercy of God in the Pardon of Sin, and also the *Charismata*, or Miraculous Gifts of the Holy Spirit, why it may not also be allowed to signify those inward Operations of the same Spirit which help our Infirmities in the practice of our Christian Duty, (which in the popular use of the word, is also what we call *Grace*) I should be glad to see a good Reason, those inward Assistencies being though not so extraordinary, yet really the greater Favours of the two. Even as much greater as *Charity* is more excellent than those *Charismata*, or Spiritual Gifts, as the Apostle positively assures us that
it

To the READER.

it is. And since he does so, it would, in my Opinion, seem somewhat strange, if that Operation of the Holy Ghost which works this Charity in us, or as the Apostle expresses it, that *sheds the Love of God abroad in our Hearts*, should not be allowed to be comprehended among the other significations of *Grace*, at least in the New Testament. But this with Submission to better Judgments.

T H E

THE
CONTENTS.

CHAP. I.

AN account of the Nature of Humility, shewing what we are properly to understand by it. Page 1.

CHAP. II.

Of the Immediate foundation of Humility, the Knowledge of our selves. p. 40.

CHAP. III.

The reasonableness of Humility, wherein the particular Reasons why we should be Humble are considered. p. 65.

CHAP.

The Contents.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Excellency of Humility. Page 132.

C H A P. V.

The Necessity of Humility considered. p. 183

C H A P. VI.

Of the particular Duty and Effects of Humility, with some Remarks upon the Signs of it. p. 225

C H A P. VII.

The Sinfulness, Odiousness, and Folly of Pride, with some Reflections upon the Pride of this present Age. p. 293

C H A P. VIII.

Wherein some of the principal Remedies against Pride, or Means for the better

The Contents.

ter attainment of Humility, are considered.

Page 330

C H A P. IX.

A Devotional Meditation, upon the several Degrees of the Divine Humiliation, in the Person of JESUS CHRIST.

P. 358

C H A P. X.

A concluding Exhortation, to the Study and Practice of the true Christian Humiliy.

P. 371

E R R A T A.

PAGE 63. l. 19. r. *aliquando*. P. 119. l. 26. r. who art. P. 132. l. 7. for is, r. in. P. 153. l. 25. r. does. P. 155. l. 6. r. deference. P. 156. l. 27. r. *Puſſilitas*. P. 216. l. 27. r. effectual. P. 268. l. 2. r. deference. P. 278. l. 12. r. hal-low. P. 362. l. 1. r. Pedegree. P. 365. l. 8. r. Example. P. 395. l. 3. Note, that the words in *Pſalm* 18, though in the Print, refer'd to *Pſalmiſt*, was by me refer'd to St. *Auſtin* upon that *Pſalm*. P. 408. l. 26, and 27. For leaves, r. leave. And for Commands, r. Command.

Theſe are the chief Errata, beſides a few falſe Pointings which I leave to the Notice and Correction of the Reader, as the Senſe ſhall direct him.

A

Practical Treatise
CONCERNING
HUMILITY.

CHAP. I.

*An Account of the Nature of Humility,
shewing what we are properly to
Understand by it.*

1. **T**HOUGH the Happiness of Heaven be Annexed to our doing the Will of God upon Earth, and not to the bare knowing of it, according to that of our Blessed Lord to his Disciples, *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them, John 13. 17.* Yet since as Practice is the end of Knowledge, so Knowledge is the means to Practice, and we cannot so perfectly do our Duty, unless we

B first

2 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

first rightly understand it ; it will be necessary for every Man that intends the performance of his Duty, to take care that he be first rightly Inform'd in the nature of it, and as the Apostle Exhorts, that he be *not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is*, Ephes. 5. 17. And therefore, since Humility is a part, and a very Fundamental part of that Will, 'tis the concern of every Christian rightly to understand what it is, and what it requires, and to have a clear Notion of it settled in his Mind, not so much for the Notion's sake (though that be not to be despised in a Creature whose Character and Distinction is Reason) as for the better direction of his Practice in a Vertue of so great Excellence and Importance. This therefore is what I shall first endeavour to give an Account of.

2. By Humility is I think generally understood a low or mean Opinion of our selves, and of our own Perfections and Endowments, whether Intellectual or Moral, whether Natural or Acquired. When a Man is cheap and vile in his own Eyes, is not High-minded, but thinks meanly of himself, to which perhaps some would add, and is content that others should do so too. For there is a double view of Humility given us by a Reverend Author, according to the Two Vices to which he considers it as Opposed,
Pride

A Treatise concerning Humility. 3

Pride and Vain-glory. To Pride, as it signifies a mean Opinion of our selves, and to Vain-glory as it signifies a Contentedness with being thought meanly of by others. *This Humility, says he, is of two sorts the First is the having a mean and low Opinion of our selves; the Second is the being content that others should have so of us. The first of these is contrary to Pride, the other to Vain-glory.* Now it is true indeed, that this Contentedness is opposed to that Vice which we call Vain-glory; but how it comes under the Formal Notion of Humility, so as to make a specialty of that general, or how Humility it self can be opposed to two Vices which are not to it in the Relation of Excess and Defect (the only Case wherein any Vertue can stand opposed to two Vices) I find it easier to Inquire than to Comprehend. It seems a clearer way of proceeding, to consider this Contentedness of being meanly thought of by others, rather as the Effect of Humility, even as its contrary Vain-glory is of Pride, than as a sort of it; and accordingly so I shall consider it in the Sequel of this Treatise. As also to consider Humility it self as opposed only to Pride, and not to Vain-glory, and accordingly so I shall Apply my self to consider it. And since thus consider'd, it is generally made to consist in a Sense of our own Meanness and Unworthi-

B 2

ness,

4 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

ness, or low Opinion of our selves, I shall there leave it where the Judgment of the World has placed it, not designing to give any new Notion of Humility, but only so to state, limit and explain, that which is commonly receiv'd, that we may in some measure rightly understand what we are all so highly concern'd to Practice.

3. In the First place then, when it is said that Humility consists in a low Opinion of our selves, I suppose we are not to understand this in a Primary and Immediate, but in a Mediate and Secondary, or if you will, not in a Direct, but in a Consequential Sense; that is, that it obliges us to have a low Opinion of our selves, not directly, but as that is the consequence of something else, to which it does directly oblige us. For the Radical Notion of Humility, and that which is Original in it, and of the first Conception of it, I take to be this, to think truly and justly of our selves, to think of our selves as we ought to think, to think of our selves as we are, neither higher nor lower, neither better nor worse. For there may be a Fault on that side too, though there be not so much Danger of it, nor so much Mischief likely to arise from it; and the proper Business of Humility is to hold the Balance even between the Extreams, and so to adjust the matter, that there may be no Extra-

tra-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 5

travagance on either side. Which Notion of Humility I ground on those words of St. Paul, *This I say through the Grace given to me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of Faith, Rom. 12. 3.* Wherein Humility is Described, First, Negatively, by a Man's not thinking of himself more highly than he ought ; that is, by not thinking too well of himself, or setting too great a value upon himself, which is the very thing we call Pride. Secondly, Positively, by thinking *Soberly* ; that is, Justly and Truly, or with due Temper. Then we have here the Rule and Standard of this *Sobriety* in thinking of our selves, which we may come up to, but must not exceed, and that is the Truth and Reality of our Endowments, *according as God has dealt to every Man the measure of Faith,* By which it may seem, that Humility is a sort of *Temperance*, and so indeed it is, and so the Apostle here calls it, with whom it is *σεμειν εις το ουπερειν*. to think Soberly or Temperately. It is a Temperance of Opinion in reference to our selves, and our own worth, and as all other parts of Temperance are, is founded upon *Justice*, and is doing Justice to our selves as well as to all the World, as consisting in a due and just Sense

B 3

and

6 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

and Estimation of our selves. Whence we may gather by the way how difficult a Vertue Humility is, it being one of the hardest things in the World for a Man rightly to know and understand himself. For which Reason, as well as for the great Influence it has upon the Conduct of our Manners, the knowledge of our selves has been so much Inculcated as the general Principle of Morality. But Humility is more particularly concern'd in it, concerning which, that which I am now observing, is, that the Primary and Radical Notion of it, is to have a true and just Sense of our selves, to think of our selves as we truly are. But then because we indeed *are* Mean, Vile, and Low, especially in this present state of corrupt Nature, and consequently cannot think of our selves truly and as we really are, unless we think Meanly of our selves ; hence it is that we are obliged so to think, because otherwise we cannot think truly. And so Humility comes by this Means to Import a Base and a Low Opinion of our selves, and is generally so represented both by Human and Divine Writers : And accordingly is express'd in Scripture by *Poverty of Spirit, Lowliness of Heart and Mind, &c.*

4. Again Secondly, when Humility is made to consist in a low Sense and Opinion of our selves, I suppose, that by our thinking

A Treatise concerning Humility. 7

ing Lowly and Meanly of our selves is to be understood our doing so, not always in respect of this or that particular Excellency or Endowment, but upon the *whole*. For it may be that we really have those particular Excellencies; and if we have them, why may we not *think* we have them? Indeed if we have them not, then 'tis Folly as well as Vanity to think that we have them. We deceive our selves, and make our selves Ridiculous and Contemptible to others. And therefore Humility *does* oblige us to such a low Opinion of our selves, as not to think that we have those Excellencies which we have not. *For if a Man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself,* as the Apostle tells us, *Gal. 6. 3.* But if we really have them, to think that we have them, is not to *deceive* our selves, but to think rightly so far; and what harm there should be in that, or what vertue in the contrary, is equally hard to conceive. For certainly, Humility is no Enemy to Truth, or a right Understanding, but the best Temper for it; and therefore says the Wise Man, *with the Lowly is Wisdom, Prov. 11. 2.* Nor can it oblige us to be mistaken in the Judgment that we pass upon our selves, any more than in other things or persons. Nor is it after all to be conceiv'd, what Vertue or Excellence there should be in *Ignorance*

8 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

or *Mistake* (especially as to our selves, whom of all things we are chiefly concern'd to understand) that they should be thought worthy to be Ingredients in the Constitution of one of the best and noblest Vertues ; which is neither like to derive any Credit from such an Original or Alliance. Indeed thinking thus truly of our selves will in some sense (sometimes a Limited, and sometimes a Comparative Sense) be to think *Highly* : But what then, if thinking thus *Highly*, we at the same time think *truly* ? I confess, it might in some Cases perhaps be more safe if Men were ignorant of their own worth, and their Light did not reflect home, it being not convenient for weak heads to see the height of their Station ; but whatever the Danger may sometimes be, there can be no actual fault or moral disorder in thinking the *Truth*, in thinking our selves to be what we are. And if we are considerably Wise or Better than others (what Caution soever may be thought necessary to be used before we think so, that we may not be betrayed by the imposing partiality of Self-love) I see no harm in thinking so, any more than in thinking our selves to be Taller or Bigger than those whom we visibly exceed in Stature or Bulk.

5. And indeed, in many Cases, one can as little be avoided as the other. Light is very apt to strike the Eyes, and as I cannot
well

A Treatise concerning Humility. 9

well be ignorant of any shining Vertue or Accomplishment in my self, so neither can I be an utter Stranger to the Comparative value of it. I cannot but think my self to be Wiser than a Fool or Changeling, and better it may be than a loose Rake or profess'd Debauchè. Nor is it any great Commendation that a Man would bestow upon himself by such a Character. But if it *were*, that does not necessarily make such an Opinion of ones self unlawful, however it may make the Publication of it Imprudent. For if a Man at Fifty, may think himself Wiser than he was at Five and Twenty, as having read more, thought more, and had more Experience; why may he not for the like Reasons think the same of himself in relation to other Men, who stand in the same proportion to him, that he now does to his former self? There is no doubt but that a well studied Divine may have a just right to think that he understands Divinity better than one of the Farmers of his Parish; a Master may think he knows more than his Scholar, or else why does he pretend to Teach him; and any one that professes any Art or Science, to the study of which he has Applied, perhaps Devoted himself, may warrantably think that he understands it better than one who never bestow'd any time or thought in it, though otherwise of good Understanding.

Nay

10 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Nay, in some Cases it will be necessary that he should ; for if a *Physician* does not think he has a Competent Knowledge in his Profession, nay, that he understands it better than he who has not made it his Study, he is unfaithful to his Trust, and I do not see how he can *practise* with a good Conscience.

6. Besides, if a Man may not be allowed to be in any degree sensible of his own worth, and to think he has those Perfections which he has, how shall he be in a Capacity to thank God for them ; or how shall he think himself obliged to make a due Improvement of those Talents which he has received : And therefore says St. Paul, *I thank my God, I speak with Tongues more than you all*, 1 Cor. 14. 18. Not that a Man ought to be forward to proclaim his Excellencies, or to declare any good Opinion he has of himself but upon reasonable and weighty Occasions, of which more hereafter in its proper place ; but such an Opinion he *may* have *Salvâ Humilitate*, without any violation of Humility, which does not oblige us to such a low sense of our selves, as not to think our selves possess'd of those particular Vertues which we really have. For that would be as much (though not so dangerously) to *deceive* our selves, as if we should think our selves possess'd of those which we have not. But there is no necessity of putting a Cheat upon our
our

A Treatise concerning Humility. 11

our selves either way, though it be much easier to deceive our selves by fancying an Imaginary, than by not perceiving a real Excellency. No, we cannot well avoid seeing it ; and if we do see it, we cannot but set a just value upon it, (I do not say upon our selves *for* it) the same that we would set upon the same Perfection in another Man ; there being no reason why an Excellency should be the less valuable for being in ones *self*.

7. Much less does Humility oblige us to descend so Low, as to esteem our selves either the Meanest or the Worst of Men, the Off-scouring or Refuse of all things, the greatest Fools, or the greatest Sinners in the World. Nor can that high strain of Self-Abasement used by St. *Paul*, out of a deep sense of his own Unworthiness, *of whom I am Chief*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. with any Reason as to the thing, or equity of Interpretation, be applied to this purpose. For St. *Paul* could not think himself the greatest of Sinners ; it being manifestly a much greater Crime to Betray Christ, than to Persecute his Church. Which St. *Paul* did not do neither out of Malice, but *Ignorantly* and in *Unbelief*, as he himself tells us, *ver.* 13. in this same Chapter. And therefore when he calls himself the Chief of Sinners, there is no need of understanding any more by it than one of the Chief. But
indeed

12 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

indeed there is a place which seems with more colour of Intention, to make this a part of that lowliness of Mind which Humility requires of us, and that is, that of the same Apostle to the *Philippians*, *In lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves, Phil. 2. 3.* which by consequence is to think our selves to be the worst of all. But 'tis plain that this refers not to Judgment (for then there could be no such thing as a good Conscience) but to *Practice* and outward Deportment. And so Dr. Hammond Explains it, *That ye do nothing out of Opposition and Contention one against another, nothing Ambitionssly or Ostentatiously; but all things on the contrary with that Quietness and Humbleness, as if ye had every one a better Opinion of the other's Wisdom and Piety than his own.* Not but that there may be so much of Judgment in it too, as when we are not intimately well acquainted with others, to judge in favour of them against our selves, as not knowing but that they may have some Perfection or other Preferable to that wherein we exceed them. But still as *Charity* does not put out our Eyes as to other Mens Visible Faults, so neither does *Humility* as to our own Excellencies.

8. And indeed if it did, where would be the Vertue of it? If a Man does not see those Excellencies which he has, what Commen-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 13

commendation is there not to be Proud of them? A Man indeed may be Proud (and nothing more common) of such Excellencies as he really has not; but then it must be upon a Supposition that he has them. For Pride is not *so* a Castle in the Air, as to have no Foundation at all to rest upon. It must have a Real or an Imaginary one; a Man cannot be Proud of an Absolute Nothing. And what he does not see, and knows nothing of, is to him no better than such. But then I say, as there is no Vertue in such an Ignorance, so neither will it be any Commendation not to be proud of that which we are thus Ignorant of. But then is Humility a Commendable Vertue, and truly deserving of that Praise which it does not seek, when a Man *sees* the height upon which he stands, and yet grows not giddy with it; when a Man *knows* his own Absolute and Comparative Excellencies, and yet possesses them in *Sobriety*, with which his bare seeing of them, and thinking that he is endued with them, is not at all Inconsistent.

9. But what then becomes of that Lowliness of Mind which Humility Imports, or whereby does it express it self? I Answer, that it consists in this, that we think Meanly and Lowly of our selves upon the whole. That is, that though we think and know our selves to be Indued with such and such

Ex-

14 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Excellencies, which cannot be well hid from us while we have them ; yet we are not Exalted with them, do not think the more Highly or Worthily of our selves for them, do not value our selves upon the possession of them, or glory in them, any more than if we had them not, or knew not that we had them, as being sensible not only of other Faults or Imperfections in our selves that Counter-balance, and for the most part outweigh those Excellencies, and so make it more reasonable for us, upon the whole, to be Low than High-minded ; but also of our *Dependency* upon God, and that we have nothing but what we have receiv'd from him, and hold by his Will and Pleasure. For what though it be true that we have such and such Endowments and Perfections, yet since it is as true that we have them not from our selves (according to that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 4. 7. *What hast thou that thou didst not receive*) as we ought not to despise them that want them, so neither to think the more highly of our selves for having them, because we have them not of or from, though in our selves. For though by the Grace and Bounty of God we are something, yet of our selves we are nothing. And this I take to be that Lowliness of Mind which is Essential to Humility, and wherein the nature of it does precisely consist ; not
that

A Treatise concerning Humility. 15

that we should be Unapprehensive of any good in our selves, (for why should it be a Vice in me to *know* that which is a Vertue for me to *have*) but that considering our dependance upon God, we should think meanly of our selves upon the whole, though not Ignorant or Unconscious of certain particular Excellencies, which by his Bounty we possess. Which two things are well put together by the Apostle St. *Paul*, who at once sets himself upon a level with the Worthiest of his Order, and yet professes a Mean and Low Opinion of himself at the same time. *In nothing am I behind the very chief of the Apostles, though I be nothing, 2 Cor. 12. 11.*

10. And this will serve to help us out with a Difficulty, which otherwise perhaps will not a little trouble and entangle us. Pride, we know, generally passes for a high Opinion of our selves, as being the opposite Vice to Humility, whose Character is Lowliness of Mind with reference to our selves. And indeed so it is in a certain Sense. It is truly a High, as Humility is a Low Opinion of our selves, and accordingly we call it *High-mindedness*: And the *Psalmist* so expresses it when he says, *Lord I am not High-minded, I have no proud looks, Psal. 131.* And yet on the other side, may not those that are High, and Great, and Honourable, as King *David* was, think that they are so?

And

16 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

And may not they also think the same, who are in some measure Wise, and Knowing, as his Son was, who thought it no Breach of Humility to say, *that his Heart had great experience of Wisdom and Knowledge, and that he had gotten more Wisdom than all that had been before him in Jerusalem*, Eccl. 1. 16. May not a Prince think himself more Honourable than a Peasant, and may not a Philosopher think himself Wiser than a poor Illiterate Mechanic? He must if he will think rightly, and therefore no doubt he *may*. And yet this is in some sense, to think Highly of our selves. It is plain therefore, that 'tis not all thinking highly of our selves that is Pride, (for then they that think most according to truth, and that best understand themselves, might be most guilty of it) but in general, the thinking more highly than we ought to think, as the Apostle states it, and which he opposes to thinking *Soberly*. Which thinking more highly, may more particularly be conceived to consist, either in thinking we have those Excellencies which we have not, or in being lifted up or exalted with those which we really have; that is, in plainer words, in thinking highly of our *selves* upon that Occasion.

II. But then when I say, thinking highly of our selves, (as indeed Pride is usually said to be an high Opinion of our selves) 'tis plain

A Treatise concerning Humility. 17

plain by the foregoing Measures, that this is not necessarily to be understood as to *particular Excellencies*, as if the bare thinking that we have them, were in a faulty Sense to think Highly of our selves ; (for 'tis possible that we may really have them ; and then to think that we have them, is but to think the Truth, and so to think *Soberly*.) but it is when we think Highly of our selves Absolutely, and upon the Whole, in the same Proportion as was said before concerning Humility. That is, when we not only think that we have such and such Excellencies, for that is hardly possible to be avoided if we have them, but also indulge our Self-love so far, as to think Highly of our selves for having them, Magnifie and Applaud our selves for them, Sacrificing to our own Net, and Burning Incense to our own Drag, as the Scripture expresses it ; Glorifying in them as if they were not *Received*, but were Products of our own Fund, Things of a natural Growth, Originally and Independently our own.

12. And herein, if I mistake not, lies the very Essence and Spirit of Pride ; and that which makes it to be such a Wicked and *Untreaturely* Sin as it is, and not in the bare thinking well of our selves as to particular Excellencies. For 'tis possible to suppose, Two Men that may in that respect think equally well of themselves, that is, may think them-

C

selves

18 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

selves equally Wise, or equally Good, equally Beautiful, or equally Honourable, and yet one of them shall be Proud, and the other not. And that because, though they both agree in having the like Opinion of themselves as to these particular Excellencies, yet the one considering himself as the *Subjeſt* only of these Inherent Qualities, and not the *Author*, contents himself with knowing that he has them. And that indeed he cannot well avoid. But then knowing also from *whence*, he does not upon the whole, think the more Highly of himself upon their Account, and so possesses them without being lifted up with them. Whereas the other, not having a due Sense of his Dependency upon God (and so far not rightly understanding himself) is lifted up with those Excellencies which he sees in himself; that is, does upon the whole, and not only in a limited respect, think Highly of himself for them, which indeed is then *too Highly*, and above Measure; and so he comes under that General Character of the Apostle, of thinking *more highly of himself than he ought to think*.

13. Whence it seems to me to be very plain, that that High-mindedness, or High Opinion of our selves, supposed to Constitute the nature of Pride, does not necessarily consist in the bare thought of our having such or such Perfections, but in that *Elation* of
mind

A Treatise concerning Humility. 19

mind which follows upon that Thought, in thinking Highly of our selves upon the whole, for them. As also that the true difference between an Humble Man and a Proud Man, does not necessarily consist in this, that the one sees the Perfections he has in himself, and the other not, (for they either do, or *may* both see them, and one in as good a Light as the other) but in those different Sentiments which arise in their Minds upon that Occasion, with relation to themselves respectively. And accordingly, when we say a Man is Proud of his Knowledge, we do not, or at least should not mean the same, as that he thinks himself indued with that Perfection, (though that common way of speaking, such a one is an Ingenious Man, and he *knows* it seems to favour that Conceit) but rather that he thinks Highly of himself upon that Opinion. For sure, not every one that thinks he knows more than other Men can be said to be proud of his Knowledge, but he that Values and Magnifies himself upon that Thought. So then, Pride does not properly lie in the Opinion we have of our Knowledge or any other Perfection, where-with we conceive our selves Indued, but in that Sentiment of *Self-esteem* which follows upon that Opinion. For without doubt, the Angels that stood, might have the same Opinion of themselves, as to their particular Ex-

20 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

cellencies with those that fell ; this being only the Result of having a full understanding of their Angelic Nature, to which, neither their Goodness nor their Happiness could be any hindrance, only being under a constant Sense of their Creaturely dependance upon God, they did not reflect upon themselves with any Self-esteem for them, and so upon the whole did not think Highly of themselves, but Soberly, and as they ought to Think. Whereas the latter, by some Unattentiveness or Dissipation of thought or other, proceeding perhaps from the Overdazling Glory of their own Perfections, in the Contemplation of which they were but too ingaged, being Diverted from the actual Sense of that Dependance, grew into a forgetfulness of God, and a Fond, Vain-glorious Admiration of themselves, for those Excellencies which they could not but see in themselves ; fancying themselves as it were upon their own bottom, reposing themselves on themselves, and so enjoying the Warmth and Brightness of their own Light reflected to them, without reflecting it back again to the great Fountain of it.

14. The Ground and Sum of which whole matter, seems to be couch'd in those words of the Apostle, which I shall have occasion further to reflect upon hereafter ; *Who maketh thee to differ from another, and what hast thou that*

A Treatise concerning Humility. 21

that thou didst not receive ? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it ? 1 Cor. 4. 7. It is true indeed, that the Words are an Expostulation ; but an Expostulation that proceeds upon a Supposition, which is Two-fold. First, That we have nothing but what we have received : Not that we have absolutely nothing, but nothing but what we are beholden for. Secondly, That to glory in what we have receiv'd, as if we had not receiv'd it, that is, not barely to think we have it, but to glory in it as Originally and Independently our own ; so as upon the whole to Value our selves upon it, and think Highly of our selves for it, is the Sin of *Pride*. Then follows the Expostulation, why Men will be so Absurd, Foolish and Unreasonable, as to glory in, or for what they have received, as if they had not received it. Which comes to as much as to say, why will they be Proud, since they have nothing to be Proud of ? How far this Consideration may be of Force to abate the Swelling Pride of Mens Hearts, and to prick that Bladder of Wind wherewith the generality of them are puffed up, is not my Business now to consider, and the less, because it will be hereafter. At present I am concern'd only to Remark, what the true Notion of Pride, according to the Apostle, seems to be ; namely, that it is not to think that we have receiv'd, or

22 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

are possess'd of such and such Perfections, but to Glory in them as if we had not received them.

15. Not but that it may be Pride too, to think we have certain particular Perfections, supposing we have them not, or which comes much to the same, if we have them not in that degree wherein we think we have them, though perhaps some would call this *Conceit- edness* rather than *Pride*. However, be it which it will, it is so only upon *Supposition*, that is, supposing us not to have received what we think our selves in possession of. But to Glory in what we have received, as if we had not received it, that is *Pride Absolutely*. And so in like Proportion as to Humility, (for these mutually Illustrate and Receive Light from each other) it may be one part of it, to think lowly of our selves as to particular Excellencies, that we have them not, or not in any considerable degree ; but then this is Humility only upon Supposition, supposing that to be indeed the Case, otherwise, I know no Vertue there can be in thinking so, or Obligation so to think. But that which is Humility, Absolutely and Simply speaking, is when a Man, though not Insensible of his particular Gifts and Endowments, does yet upon the whole, think Lowly of himself, possesses them in Sobriety, without any Self-Attribution, Self-Admiration, or Self-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 23

Self-Complacency, being no more Elated for them than if he had them not, and though full of Excellencies in himself, is not at all full of himself. This I take to be true *Christian Humility*, and that which is Absolutely such, it being such a Sense of a Man's self, as every Man upon the whole ought always to have, let his particular Perfections and Endowments be what they will.

16. And in thus thinking lowly of our selves, there can be no *mistake* on either side, neither as to our *Perfections*, nor as to our *selves*. Not as to our Perfections, since tho' we are not Exalted in our selves by any Vain Complacencies and Self-Admirations for them, yet we are not here supposed to deny but that we have them. Which would be not only to offend against Truth, but against Gratitude too, in disowning the Graces and Favours of our great Benefactor. Not also as to our selves, since the true state of our selves (as will appear hereafter) is indeed no other than this Absolute Opinion of our selves Supposes and Represents, which though it be accounted Low for so doing, is yet as High as we can pretend to deserve, who have nothing from our selves, and every thing from God. So that there is Justice done every way.

17. And indeed as we cannot well in this way, of thinking Meanly and Vilely of our selves, descend too Low, or degrade our selves

24 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

too Far ; so if what is said by some Spiritual Persons concerning the utter *Exinanition* of our selves, the *Mystical Death* and *Self Annihilation*, &c. be intended in this absolute sense of thinking Lowly of our selves, it ought not to pass for a High Strain of Spirituality, much less for Enthusiastic Cant, but (allowing only for the particularity of the Expressions) for a Sober and Well-grounded Truth. But indeed if it be meant as to particular Excellencies or Endowments, as if we were to see no such thing in our selves, but in that respect also to look upon our selves as *nothing*, I do not see how it can be maintain'd. Nor do I think it any Service to Religion to Interpret the Duties of it so, as to make them Inconsistent with good Sense.

18. Again Thirdly, when Humility is made to consist in a Low Opinion of our selves, I suppose this is not so to be understood, as if we were to have a Vile and a Base Esteem of Human Nature as it is in it self, or of that Human Nature whereby we are Men. We may indeed be sensible of its Limitations and Defects, so as not to over-value it, or our selves for it ; but Absolutely to think Basely of it, I think we ought not. For this would be, to despise and undervalue one of the Master Pieces of the Divine Workmanship, which to do even to the meanest of them, especially, after the declared Approbation of them
by

A Treatise concerning Humility. 25

by him that made them, would perhaps better deserve the Name of an Impious and Saucy Pride, than of a Pious Humility. For what are we, that we should sit in Judgment upon the Works of God to Vilifie and Disparage them, which were made all in Number, Weight and Measure, by an Almighty Power, conducted by an Infinite Wisdom. This mean Opinion then, I suppose, is to be understood chiefly of Human Nature, as it is now in this Corrupt and Degenerate state of it, and especially as lodged in our own particular Persons, that which we properly call our Selves. And this Corrupt Nature of ours, is also to be thought meanly of, not so much as a Nature, as a Corrupt Nature. For as Corrupt as our Nature is, we have nothing *Substantial* in us but what is Good, and a great deal that is Excellent, being made in the Image and Likeness of God, which still in great Measure shines forth in us. And accordingly, this is given as the Reason why Murther is to be punished with Death, because 'tis the Violation of a Creature made after God's Image; which Consideration would not be of that force, if part of that Divine Image did not still remain in him. And besides this same Corrupt Nature of ours, is the very Nature, as to the Substance of it, that will hereafter be Glorified. Which shews that this Nature of ours, as a Nature, is not
so

26 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

so Lowly to be thought of. Human Nature so consider'd, is still the Object of our just Esteem. And in this sense I suppose it is, that we are Advised to *Reverence our selves*, that is, that Human Nature which is in us. Of whose Dignity to be sensible, is also look'd upon as a great Security against Vice and Wickedness; and which now, since the great Honour done it by the Incarnation of Christ, has a New and Peculiar Title to our Respect. But indeed, considering our Natures as Corrupt, we cannot well think too Low, either of them or of our selves, since our Nature is now become the Seat and Subject of a great many Evils; and all the Good that is in us, is a stream that derives from another Fountain.

19. Which points out to us another Consideration, wherein we are to think Meanly of our *selves*, and that is consider'd as a *Principle*. And this is a Consideration that will hold in any state of Human Nature, Corrupt or Intire, now in this Mortal Life, or hereafter in Glory. Forasmuch as we are not, never were, nor ever shall be to our selves, the Principle of that Good which we have in our selves, as having nothing of that kind but what we have received. And accordingly thus again, we cannot well think too Meanly of our selves. And so far Humility is Absolutely concern'd. But as to particular Perfections,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 27

fections, which we may have or not have, here Humility will be concern'd in thinking of our selves according as the Case is. Humility obliges me not to think my self Better than I am, or Wiser than I am. And this general Obligation indeed always holds : But as to this or that particular Perfection, the measure is, that I must not think I have it if I have it not. For to think *so*, is to think of my self above what I ought to think, because 'tis above what I really am, which is Pride and Vanity. But how? Only upon Supposition ; the Supposition of my not being or having, what I think my self to be or have. For if you change the Supposition, the thing will change too ; and that which was before Pride, will be but a Just and Sobber Opinion of my self. But to think that I have that or any other Perfection of my self, or which is all one, to Value my self for it, or to Glory in it, as if I derived it from that Original ; this is Pride *Absolutely*. For this is to think Highly of my self under the Consideration of a *Principle*, as if I my self were the Principle of that Perfection which is in my self, plainly against that of the Apostle ; *why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not receiv'd* ; which is Absolutely against Humility, which obliges me in this Respect, *always* to think Lowly of my self. And if I do so, there will be no occasion to think Basely of that Nature

28 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

ture which God has given me, unless with Relation to this Corrupt and Disorder'd state of it, as was said before.

20. Not but that the Human Nature it self, as indeed any other Nature except the Divine, may possibly be *over-valued*. For tho' we are not to think Disparagingly of that Excellent Nature which God has given us, and which he has now, as I may say, given *himself* too ; yet we are in Humility obliged, not to think that he has given us a better Nature than indeed he has. And who knows, but that this might make a part in the Pride of Angels. 'Tis not unlikely, that they might value themselves too much upon their *Angelic Order*, to which they had some particular Temptation, as having a whole Species of Intellectual Creatures below them. But we have not that Reason, as being in the lowest form of Intelligence, Inferiour to Angels, and but a degree above the Brutes. Nor do Men use to be Proud of that Nature which they have in Common, but of those personal Endowments whereby they are distinguish'd. On the contrary, Men are apt for the most part to think too meanly of their Natures, and so to sink beneath themselves, in not endeavouring to Aſt up to the true Dignity of their Condition : So unhappily verifying that of the Psalmist, *Man being in Honour hath no Understanding, but is compared unto the Beasts* that

A Treatise concerning Humility. 29

that perish, Psal. 49. Humility therefore, cannot be very much concern'd here. However in the strictness of the thing, I think it must be allowed to be one part of it, so to regulate our Opinion of our selves, even in this less dangerous respect, as to keep us from setting too high a Value upon our Human Nature. But as for having a *low* Opinion of it, that is, I mean, such as is *Absolutely* so (for as for thinking lowly of Human Nature compared to Superiour Beings, that's another Matter) I do not see how Humility can oblige us to any such thing. Since to think low of our selves in this sense, is to reflect upon God, whose Workmanship we are, and whose Honour is concern'd in any Reproach that is cast upon our Natures. And I cannot think that good Humility, which offends against Piety.

21. Again in the Fourth Place, when 'tis said that Humility is a low Opinion of our selves, I conceive that this is to be understood *Absolutely*, in Opposition to that which is *Comparative*. For the Degrees of Perfection have such a vast Latitude, and the Difference arising from them is so wide, not only in Creatures of different Orders, as between Angels and Men, but even in those of the same, as between one Man and another; that there is no Man perhaps so Proud and full of himself, but that he may find some one or other
even

30 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

even of his own kind, (not to go any higher) who so Visibly and Unquestionably out-shines him, that he cannot but at sight acknowledge the odds, and submit himself as Inferiour to him, and that without any Dishonour or Sense of Disparagement. So far from that, that 'tis thought an Honour to have *some* Persons Prefer'd before us ; and you cannot well Complement some Men, more than to tell 'em that they are not so good Mathematicians as Dr. *Wallis* or Mr. *Newton* ; or so good Metaphysicians as *Suarez* or *Baronius*. For the very Comparison supposes them to be considerable, though they are post-poned in it ; and if you should have said more, perhaps you would have said less, since then it would have look'd like Flattery, which is what every Proud Man hates when it carries that Appearance. Therefore I say, there is no Man but who may think meanly of himself *comparatively* speaking, and may be also content to be so thought of by others, and yet he may be still a very Proud Man for all that. For though he thinks lowly of himself in respect of another, yet he may think a great deal too high. And though he does not think himself as Wise as another, yet he may think himself a great deal Wiser than he is. Or if not that, yet he may be lifted up with the Thoughts of what he rightly thinks himself possess'd of, either by looking
upon

A Treatise concerning Humility. 31

upon himself as the *Root* and *Principle* of his own Perfections, or by glorying in them as if he were so. For all this is consistent with a *Comparative* low Opinion of ones self. But that which is consistent with Pride, cannot be the form that Constitutes Humility. And therefore such a low Opinion of a Man's self, is not low enough. It may indeed be low enough to make him outwardly Civil, at least to those to whom he allows the Precedency, (who will call all those Civil who strike Sail to *them*) but not enough to make him inwardly and truly Humble as a Christian ought to be. To Answer which Character, he must think lowly of himself Absolutely, as he is in himself, and not only Comparatively, as he is consider'd with regard to other Men.

22. For the more full opening, and more clear stating the Nature of true *Christian Humility*, I think it necessary to add in the last place, that this low Opinion of our selves, wherein that excellent Vertue is supposed to consist, is not to be understood as an Actual, Transient, Occasional Thought, but as a standing, settled, and *Habitual Sense* of our own Meanness and Unworthiness, permanently Fix'd, and deeply Radicated in the Soul. For as 'tis the Frame and Temper of the Mind that renders Men Good or Bad, Vertuous or Vicious in general, so 'tis that which truly makes Men Proud or Humble. Men are De-

nominated

32 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

nominated from their Habits, and not from
 their Acts, unless those Acts be equivalent to
 Habits. 'Tis not an Act of Drunkenness that
 makes a Man a Drunkard, nor an Act of Ab-
 stinence that gives a Man a Right to be cal-
 led Chaste or Temperate. And so here, 'tis
 not now and then to have a Vain or High
 Thought of ones self, darting through the
 Mind, that makes a Man Proud, for that an
 Humble Man may have : Nor to have now
 and then a low or depressed Sense of ones
 self that makes a Man Humble, for that a
 Proud Man may have ; and there's hardly any
 but who has. As much as Self-love prevails
 over and domineers in the Corrupt Nature of
 Man, there is no Body but now and then
displeases himself ; the Pulse of his Heart beats
 low, and he thinks as meanly of himself per-
 haps as other People do. A Slight or Disap-
 pointment at Court, will deject the Spirit of
 a Proud *Haman*, and an Impending Affliction
 will make a Wicked *Ahab* to *walk softly*. But
 Humility is the *state* of the Soul, and he is
 the right Humble Man, whose Ordinary and
 Habitual Sense of himself is Vile and Low,
 whose *Dwelling* is in the Valleys ; as that of
 Proud *Lucifer* was upon the Mount, in the
 sides of the North, and above the heights of
 the Clouds, *Isa. 14.* From whence, though
 he should chance upon occasion to Descend,
 yet having a Principle within of another
Ele-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 33

Element, he is to be measured by the place of his ordinary and natural Abode, and not by that where he accidentally happens to be. And the same holds as to Humility, which imports an Habitual Lowliness of Mind. And accordingly the *Psalmist*, in the account that he gives of himself as to this matter, says, *That he did not only restrain his Soul, but keep it low, like as a Child that is weaned from his Mother*, *Psal.* 131.

23. This may suffice for stating the nature of Humility, so as to shew in what Sense it is a low Opinion of our selves. Only from its being so in the General, we may make these Two further Reflections not Unserviceable to our present Purpose. First, *That it is the Thought of the Mind, and not the Temper of the Body, that makes a Man Humble*. Which I the rather Note, because as all Virtues have something in the temper of the Body that resembles them, and is oftentimes mistaken for them; so Humility as much as any, if not more. There is a Coldness of Constitution, a Lowness of Spirit, and a certain Quietness of Nature which looks like it, and is perhaps often taken for it, and that even by our selves as well as others. Men that have that Temper, being generally reserv'd, and not very forward or assuming, or free to enter upon great Undertakings, are
D thought

34 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

thought Humble and Modest, and to decline them from a sense of their own Unaptness and Insufficiency for them. Whereas those who have more Flame in their Constitutions, and are of more Lively and Mercurial Spirits, being more brisk and forward either to speak or act, are for the contrary Reason apt to incur the Censure of Pride when they have not the fault of it, but perhaps, in the Interior of their Minds, are the more Humble Men of the Two. 'Tis not therefore the Temper of the *Body*, but the State and Disposition of the *Mind*, that makes that true Poverty of Spirit wherein Humility consists.

24. The other Reflection that arises from Humility's being a low Opinion of our selves, is, *that it is a thing wholly Inward, and not an Outward Address.* We usually talk indeed of a Proud Insolent Behaviour, as also of a Lowly and Humble one ; but this is to be understood no otherwise, than as the Gestures and Movements of the Body are significations of the temper of the Mind. And that indeed they may sometimes be ; but Humility does not consist in Looks and Postures, any more than true Piety and Devotion does ; however, it may be Natural to it to express it self by them, though not so Infallibly neither, as to warrant us to conclude that we have there found Humility, where we observe
those

A Treatise concerning Humility. 35

those outward Indications, as I shall shew when I come to consider the *Signs* of Humility. In the mean time, be those Indications true, or be they false, still they are but Indications. But as for Humility it self, it is an inward thing, lodg'd in those inward parts, where God, as the *Psalmist* says, *Psal.* 51. requires Truth, and makes us to understand Wisdom secretly in the inner Man, the Recess of the Soul, that Spirit of the Mind, *Eph.* 4. 23. which St. *Paul* makes to be the Seat and Subject of true Regeneration. There Pride Erects her Throne, Sits in Imperial State, and Exalts her self on High, Crown'd, Waited upon, Attended, Courted, and Flatter'd by *Self-love*. And there also Humility has her Foot-stool, a Low and Abject, but an Easie and Quiet Seat, that yields true Rest and Peace to the Soul ; our own Nothing, and God's Fulness, being the best Center and Repose of the Creature.

25. The Sum of this Account is this. Humility in the Primary Sense and Radical Notion of it, is a true and just Estimation of our selves, to think of our selves rightly, and as we ought to think, that is, to think of our selves as we are. But then because we indeed *are* Vile and Low, therefore Humility in the Secondary Sense of it (which is the Sense that now passes for the ordinary No-

36 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

tion of Humility) imports a Base and Low Opinion of our selves. But then this Low Opinion of our selves, is not necessarily to be understood as to our particular Excellencies, as if it were not consistent with Humility, to think our selves possess'd of them when we have them, but that we think Lowly of our selves upon the whole, so as not to value our selves upon those Perfections which we have, any more than if we had them not from a sense of our Dependency upon God, that we are nothing of our selves, nor have any thing in our selves but what we have received. But then again in this low Opinion of our selves, we are to regard our selves chiefly as to the state of our corrupt Nature, and as a Root or Principle, in which respect indeed we are nothing, as having nothing Originally from our selves. Then again, this low Opinion of our selves to which Humility obliges us, is to be understood *Absolutely* as we are in our selves, and not only Comparatively, with regard to other Men, there being hardly any but who in this latter sense do, or may think meanly of themselves. Which low Opinion of our selves, that it may be indeed that Humility which Christianity requires, and to complete the Notion of it, must be as I have shewn, not a transient Act, but a settled and an abiding Habit of the Soul,
tho-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 37

thoroughly possess'd and affected with a Deep and Habitual Sense of its own Vileness and Unworthiness. And this I take to be true Christian Humility.

26. To perfect the Account of which, I think fit to add these Two further Collateral Remarks. First, That Humility is the proper Vertue of a *Creature*. It is true indeed, that in the most Large and Primary Sense of it, as it signifies a true and just Estimation of ones self, nothing hinders but that God may be capable of it. Nay, 'tis most certain, that he does and must possess it, as much as any other Perfection. For to think rightly, is an *Absolute* Perfection of an Intelligent Being ; one of those Perfections which the Schools call *Perfectiones simpliciter simplices*, that is, a Perfection that is purely and simply so ; a Perfection wherein there is no Imperfection, and not only in a certain Kind, or as to a limited Respect. And therefore the most perfect Being must needs have it whoever wants it ; so that in this Sense also we may securely say, *we are sure that the Judgment of God is according to Truth*, as to himself, as well as to all other things. But indeed, if Humility be consider'd in the more strict and reduced Sense of it, and as it is commonly taken for a low Opinion of ones self, so God is not capable of it, but the Crea-

38 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

ture only. The Superexcellency of his Nature sets him Infinitely above it, and that even upon the former Supposition, since he cannot think truly of himself, without thinking Highly at the same time to the utmost Degree. But then that *Highly*, though it would be Pride in us or in any Creature, is not so in him, because he cannot think of himself above what he is, nor consequently above what he ought to think.

27. The other Remark is, that Humility is that special part of the Duty of Man which respects *our selves*. We talk indeed of Humility towards God, and Humility towards our Neighbour. And 'tis true indeed, there is so much Foundation for this way of speaking, as that the Effects of Humility will be found to extend even to these, there being particular Duties arising from it, wherein God and our Neighbour are concern'd as well as our selves, as I shall shew under a distinct Head for that purpose, when I come to treat of the particular Duties of Humility. But though there may be some Variety in the Duties of it, yet I think 'tis plain, that the thing it self properly speaking is but *one*, and that we our selves are the Proper and Immediate Subject of it; Humility being a low Sense and Opinion of a Man's self, according to the Measures above described, and
so.

A Treatise concerning Humility. 39

so reducible to that part of the Duty of Man, which the Apostle has pointed out to us under the Head of *Sobriety* ; which is a Duty that immediately Affects our *selves*. But how far God and our Neighbour are concern'd in it, is indeed a thing very fit to be consider'd, but not I think in this place.

D 4

C H A P.

C H A P. II.

Of the immediate foundation of Humility, the knowledge of our selves.

I. **T**HE great and ultimate foundation of Humility, as of every other good thing that is in us, is no doubt the Grace of God, who is that Father of Lights from whom every good and perfect Gift descends, that living Spring and Fountain, who like the Sun, sends forth the Rays of his Goodness and Perfection upon us, but without *Setting* and without *Changing*. He is our Light and our Life, and every thing that is in us (except *Sin*) we derive from him ; there being nothing in Nature, Grace or Glory, but what is a Participation of God, from whose fullness we all receive. But yet as in matters of Theory and Science, one Truth is connected with another, and one Conclusion depends upon another as its immediate ground, tho' they all ultimately depend upon their first Principles ; so also in things of a Moral and Practical Nature, one Vertue in us depends immediately upon another, with which in the Order and Nature of things it has a Connection, though the Grace of God be the last Ground and Foundation of all.

A Treatise concerning Humility. 41

2. I make a difference here between the *Foundation* of Humility, and the *Reasons* which we have to be Humble. By the *Reasons*, I mean such Considerations or Arguments drawn from the Nature of Man and the Circumstances of our own Condition, as may serve to shew how reasonable Humility is, and how well it becomes us. For though whatever may be said to the advantage of Humility, or to recommend the practice of it (as suppose that it gives *rest* to the Soul) may in a large sense be said to be a Reason of it ; yet Humility consisting in a low Opinion of our selves, nothing I suppose can be strictly said to be a Reason why we should be Humble but that which shews it to be reasonable that we should have that low Opinion, which must be some Consideration or other taken from our selves. By the *Foundation* of Humility, I mean some Principle or Habit in our selves, upon which our Humility is immediately Founded, and upon which it actually rests, as upon its Basis. The difference between which two, may be illustrated by the difference that is between the Line given, upon which an Equilateral Triangle is erected, and the Reason which he that erects it has to erect it. The Reason is some Consideration or other which moves him to do it ; it may be the use he may make of it in measuring an inaccessible Line. But the Line given,
is

42 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

is the very Basis of the Triangle it self, upon which the Figure is raised and stands. Now this Foundation of Humility that carries the like proportion to it, that the Line given does to the Figure, I take to be the Knowledge of our selves. For the Reasons that we have to be Humble, are not the very foundation upon which our Humility immediately rests, but the intimate Sense and Perception which we have of those Reasons, wherein the knowledge of our selves is necessarily involved, those Reasons being taken from our selves.

3. Not that I would exclude the Knowledge of God. For as the sum of all that which deserves the name of true Wisdom in us, consists in these two things, the Knowledge of God and our selves, according to

Sermo. de Obedientia.

that of St. Bernard, *Deus noverrim me, noverrim te*, and as there

is also a mutual Connexion between these two, the Knowledge of our selves, leading us to the Knowledge of God in whom we Live, Move, and have our Being, and the Knowledge of God giving us a right point of View wherein we may behold our selves in a true Light, so as to make a right Judgment of our selves; so also, and as a consequence of this, it is readily allowed, that the Knowledge of God tends exceedingly to the Humiliation of the Creature, who cannot
but

A Treatise concerning Humility. 43

but look upon himself with Contempt, nay, even the greatest Displacency and Abhorrence (as *Job* did) when he Contemplates a Being of such tremendous Glory and Majesty. But then when we speak of the Knowledge of God, we must mean, either the Knowledge of God as he is in himself, or the Knowledge of God as he stands in relation to us. If as he is in himself, 'tis true indeed as was said before, that this serves very much to make us Humble, but then it is First, *Comparatively*, as all other excellent things do (though in a greater degree) by Eclipsing and Outshining. And Secondly, *Mediately*, as it serves to bring us to a right understanding of our selves. So that the Knowledge of our selves is still the *immediate* Ground, even of that Humility which the Contemplation and Knowledge of God works in us. But if by the Knowledge of God, we mean the Knowledge of him as he stands in relation to us, then this will be included in the other ; it being impossible we should have a right Knowledge of our selves, unless we also understand, and have a full sense of our dependence upon God, which is the same as to know him as he is in relation to *us*. So that upon the whole, I think it most proper to consider the knowledge of our selves as the Foundation of our Humility.

4. This

44 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

4. This is that Knowledge, which was so recommended of Old in the Schools of Wisdom, as of the greatest Excellence and Importance for all the Votaries of it. For which Reason, that well known Sentence which exhorted to it (*Know thy self*) was Ingraven in Letters of Gold over the Porch of the Temple of *Apollo*, intimating, that he who would have Access to that Divinity, whose Character was Wisdom, or entrance into his Temple, must first enter into himself, and endeavour rightly to know and understand himself. And indeed, what has he to do with *Wisdom*, that has not Learnt the first Elements of it, or what need will he think he has of any, that does not know his own Ignorance? Antiquity therefore might be Excused, for the fondness it had for this saying, as a sentence of a Celestial Extraction; as also for placing it upon *Apollo's* Temple, since 'twas a much Diviner Oracle than was ever delivered thence.

5. There is an Excellency in all Knowledge, and accordingly, that Being which is absolutely perfect, has all. But there are two ways, whereby any one Knowledge becomes more Excellent than another. One is the Dignity and Excellency of the Object, and the other is the Relation it has to us, or the Concern we have in it. Now upon both these Accounts, the Knowledge of our selves is
very

A Treatise concerning Humility. 45

very considerable, and such as highly deserves our study. But especially for the latter Reason, we are indeed Noble Creatures, and have an Excellent Nature, whose Model was as Divine as its Author ; but still there are Creatures as Excellent, and more Excellent than our selves, and the Being that made us, is Infinitely Above us. Again, we are Noble Creatures, but still we are but Creatures, and so the knowledge of our selves, may perhaps be thought inferiour to the knowledge of those necessary and immutable Truths, wherein what we call *Science* does properly consist. But however, there is something in the knowledge of our selves which supplies that Defect, and makes it of the greatest Importance to us, and that is the Concern which we have in it. And in this respect it is beyond the Sciences ; since while *they* perfect the Understanding, this serves to regulate the motions of the Will, (which at present is our greater concern) ; while they make us Learned, this makes us truly *Wise* ; while they imploy our Speculation in the search of Truth, this Teaches us to order and improve our practice in the prosecution of that which is *good*, to keep our Hearts with all diligence, to govern our Passions, to direct the course of our Actions ; in one word, to Live and Dye well, which is of greater Concernment to us, than to comprehend all that is to be known in any Art or Science.

6. Up-

46 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

6. Upon these Considerations, the knowledge of our selves ought to be the great study and enquiry of Man, who ought to look upon it as his proper Science, wherein his Time and his Thoughts are to be employed ; and which indeed are seldom employed better, than when he retires from the World to enter into himself, and leaving the Amusements of News and Politics, and neglecting the Affairs and Transactions of States and Kingdoms, sets himself to examine the state of his own Soul, and to observe and reflect upon whatever passes within the Region of his own Breast, where God and himself only have a Right to Judge. Nothing certainly can be more necessary for a Man, that has Reason and Understanding, than to employ them in the study of himself, that so whatever else he is ignorant of, he may not be a stranger at home, being no where so much concern'd as there.

7. But where is the Man that knows himself, or that so much as studies himself ? This is the study, which not only the Idle, but the inquisitive fly ; and here, if any, where, Men love Darknes rather than Light : Every one carefully shuns and avoids himself ; and as much as Men Love and Admire themselves, they care to be as little in their own Company as they can. And if they happen to fall into it (as there are some
short

A Treatise concerning Humility. 47

short turns, where Men must meet themselves) they try all ways, and use all shifts to be disingaged from it again, and will chuse to be in any Company rather than in their own. And if no other is to be had, it is thought a *Penance*, and is call'd by the dismal name of *Solitude*, and is submitted to as a Condemned State, till they can have that deliverance from it for which they wait. And yet they would be thought to know the World, and to understand Men as they call it, tho' the knowledge of Human Nature be best Learnt in the *School of the Breast* (as *St. Austin's* Expression is) from those secret Reflections which we make upon the motions of our own Minds, that very Study and Knowledge of themselves which they so studiously decline.

8. Not that they want *Curiosity*, being for the most part but too inquisitive. But they naturally look out of themselves with their Minds, as well as with their Eyes, Reflection being more painful than a direct View. They have Curiosity, but their Curiosity leads them out of themselves to other Objects, and so serves not to Recollect, but to Disperse them. Nay, it not only leads them away from themselves, but (as if they could never be safe enough from that their Aversion) from all those things that are near themselves, to such as are most Foreign and Remote from themselves. Hence 'tis, that those things that are
most

48 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

most distant from themselves, either in Time or Place, are most valued and admired. Antient Authors are valued above Modern ; and things that come a great way off, gain as stories do by the *Carriage*, and are prefer'd before what is of a Neighbouring Production. Men study the Stars and Planets, with a more Ambitious Curiosity than the Earth they live upon, tho' that be a Planet too, and are more curious to know other Countries than their own ; and since their Minds are chiefly themselves, are more regardful of their Bodies than they are of their Souls.

9. That Mens Ignorance of themselves should make them Vain and Proud, is no wonder ; Pride being the natural Effect of *Self-Ignorance* ; but one would think, that the Pride Men take in themselves, should hinder them from being ignorant of themselves, should make them think themselves worthy of their own Consideration, put them upon the study, and bring them to the knowledge of themselves, and so be its own *Cure*. But it is so far otherwise, that notwithstanding all their Pride, and Self-love too, Men fly nothing so much as the Study and Knowledge of themselves, treat themselves as despicable Beings, expressing towards themselves that very Contempt which they do to a Book which they disdain to Read, or to a Man whose Company and Conversation they
scorn-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 49

scornfully decline, as not thinking him worth their Acquaintance. And yet they plunge themselves in the Arts and Sciences, and with open Arms, grasp at all Learning and Knowledge ; so rushing into *Apollo's* Temple, without minding what is Written over the *Porch*.

10. The Knowledge of our selves is a vast Theory absolutely Consider'd, and such as exceeds the proportion of our Philosophy thoroughly to comprehend. Human Nature is too big for it self at present ; our Corporeal and Intellectual Frame, making up between them a *little World*, and such as for the greatest and best part of it, is, and will be in this State, an *unknown* one to us. But neither is it necessary that we should Comprehend it any further, than as the Knowledge of our selves is of a practical Influence, and serves to the due Order and Government of our Thoughts and Actions while we are here ; where if we understand so much of Human Nature, as to Live like Men, we may leave the rest to be then known, when we have a better Light to see in, and our glorified Nature will afford us a more worthy Object for the Scene of our Contemplation.

11. When therefore I speak of the Knowledge of our selves, I mean not so much that of our Natural, as that of our Moral selves. That is, not so much the understanding the Philosophy of our Nature, either as to the

E Parts

50 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Parts whereof it is Composed, or the Mysterious Union of those Parts, (a thing which few Men have a Capacity for, and wherein 'tis easier for the most capable to lose than to find themselves) as the understanding the State, Condition, and Circumstances of our Nature. The original State of it, the present State of it, and the future State of it. The State of it as it is in it self, and the State of it as it is in Relation to God, and to one another, not excluding so much, even of the Philosophy of it, as is necessary to the right understanding of that State. For Morality having its last ground in the Nature of things, the Knowledge of it has also such a dependance upon the other, that there is no understanding our Moral, without some Knowledge of our Natural selves.

12. By the Knowledge of our selves therefore, as far as our present Concern requires, we are here chiefly to understand the Knowledge of our selves *as Creatures*, Beings that might not have been at all, were not till the other Day, and that were then out of Nothing, and that still depend upon the Cause of their Being for every Moment of their continuance in it. As Creatures not purely Spiritual and Intellectual, but of a mixt and compounded Nature, consisting of Soul and Body, vastly Different, and wonderfully United; but both not only Finite in their Substances,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 51

stances, but very Narrow and Limited in their Powers and Operations; and the latter, form'd of the very Dust upon which we tread, and such, as even in the first Institution of Nature, was of a Passible, Corruptible, and Mortal Contexture, so as to need, not only the ordinary reparation of Food, but even an extraordinary Preservative, the Sovereign *Elixir* of the Tree of Life, to keep it from Actual Death and Dissolution. As *Sinful* Creatures, as that signifies, First, Creatures whose Nature is Corrupted, and the Powers and Faculties of it in a Disorder, the Spirit being subject to the Body, and the Law in the Members Warring against the Law of the Mind, whereby we are alienated from the Life of God, strongly inclined to the Pleasures of Sense, and far Degenerate from that State of Integrity wherein we were made, so as not to be restored to it without an Infinite Grace of God. And as that signifies, Secondly, Creatures that are Actual Sinners, Sinners against God, against Themselves, and against their Fellow Creatures; that Abuse their Powers, Disturb the Order of Things, Transgress the Laws of their Creatour, Contradict the End of their Beings, acting no less against their own Reason and Happiness, than against the Commands of him, *whose they are, and whom they ought to serve*. Again, as Creatures Restored by the Grace of God, and

52 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Redeemed by the Son of God, who was fain to Humble himself for our Pride, and to make Attonement for us by a Sacrifice of an Infinite Value, because our Sins were of an Infinite Demerit. In fine, as Poor, Weak, Impotent, Indigent, Miserable Creatures, whose Understanding is Blind in many things, Erroneous in most, and Short-sighted in all. Whose Will, like a sick Pulse, is Irregular, and out of Temper, sometimes strong and high as in a Fever ; sometimes weak and low, as in a Languishing or Dying State, but always Unconstant and Uncertain. Whose Passions are like the Raging Sea, driven and tossed with the Winds, with every Object that strikes them, easily Moved, and hardly Composed, Furious, Unruly, and Rebellious, Humoursom, Difficult, and Unaccountable, keeping no proportion with the Nature or Moment of things, but Violent where they should be Moderate, and Moderate and Remiss where they should be high-set and Transporting. Whose Senses are Dull and Slow, Fallacious and Dangerous, the Scenes of Error and Temptation, that gives us False Alarms, and confuse Uncertain Reports ; so that they are not to be trusted in their Informations, without the Correction of Reason, any further than what relates to the good of the Body. And then again, whose Bodies are Frail and Weak, Heavy and Un-
active,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 53

active, Corruptible and Mortal, the Center of all Infirmities and Diseases, a slight Fa-brick, finely Built indeed, but of Vile Mate-rials, and for a short Continuance, and whose Conclusion is to Dye, and to make its Bed in the Dust, and by degrees to be Dissolv'd in-to it ; in the mean time, to be a portion for Worms, and to have its Dwelling in the Land of Darknes and Silence, where all things are forgotten.

13. To this we may further add, the great, and now a little unseasonable Pride of Man, notwithstanding all these Humbling Circumstances, (*Poor* and *Proud* being too much the Character of us all) his profound Ignorance of himself, the Vanity and Levity of his Thoughts, the Deceitfulness of his Heart, the Unfixedness and Dissipation of his Spirit, even when most concern'd to be Serious and Recollected, the folly of his Conduct, the trifling use that he makes of his little time, how he walks in a Vain Shadow, and disquiets himself in Vain, being Wise in little things, and in the great Concern of all, Acting as if he understood not the Rules of common Prudence ; the many Foolish things that are done by the Wisest, and the many Ill things that are done by the Best, and the little good that is done by all, and that even that little has its Root and Principle in the Grace of God, without which prevent-

54 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

ing us that we may have a good Will, and working with us when we have that good Will, we can do nothing. That in fine we depend upon God, not only for our Being and the Continuance of it, but also, for all the Comforts and Supplies of this present Life, and all the Hopes of a better, for all our Gifts and Endowments, whether of Body or of Mind, whether of Nature or of Grace, as having nothing but what we have received, and as not being sufficient of our selves to do the least Good, or to repent of the least Evil, or so much as to think a good Thought, or even to *think at all*.

14. This, though not a full, is a true Account of Human Nature, without any Aggravation or Excess; and if we be not great Strangers to our selves, we must own it to be our Picture, as neither flattering our Pride, nor defrauding us of our just due. For tho' I do not say that we are no worse than we are here represented, yet sure I am, that we are not here represented worse than we are; and therefore he that truly understands himself, must thus think of himself, thus at least, if not worse; and if he does not conceive of himself after this manner, how Wise or Intelligent soever he may otherwise be, 'tis certain, that he does not know himself. But then when I say that this is truly to know our selves, to think of our selves after this manner,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 55

ner, I would not be so understood, as if barely to know all this in a Notional way, as we understand the Truth of a Proposition when it comes before us, or as if the having such Thoughts occasionally passing in our Minds, as I have now I am Writing this, or as my Reader may have now he is Reading it, should be enough to Intitle us to the Knowledge of our selves; but to be Penetrated with a Deep and Inward, with a Serious and Considerate, with a Feeling and an Affecting Sense of it, and such as does not now and then break out in Flashes, like the Transient Fires of the Night, and then leaves a Man in the Dark again, more puzzled and uncertain than before, but such as rests upon him, and continues with him, not as a dormant Power or Habit, but as a permanent living Act, always Exerting it self, or to keep to our last Allusion, such as dwells with him as a constant and settled *Day-light*, though it may sometimes shine out upon him, more Brightly and Vigorously than at other times, as that also does. For even the Day it self has its Clouds, but yet still 'tis Day if the Sun shines, though it does not shine out.

15. Now this Knowledge of our selves, has a general Influence upon the whole Body of Christian Life and Practice, and indeed without a competent measure of it, I think it an impossible thing, to be either a Good

56 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Man or a Good Christian. So that 'tis an Inscription that may become the Church of Christ, as well as the Temple of *Apollo*, *Know thy self*. But I am no further concern'd in it at present, than as it affects our *Humility*, whereof it is the very Ground and Foundation. Necessary it is that there should be some, both for the raising so weighty a Fa-brick, and for the supporting it when raised. And this I take to be it, as being that upon which it immediately and actually rests. Whoever thus truly knows himself will be Humble, and whoever is truly Humble, must be supposed in some Measure to know himself, not perhaps with a Clearness, Distinctness, and Exactness of Conception, (the generality of Men neither knowing themselves, nor any thing else perhaps after that manner) but he must have at least, a general and confuse Sentiment and Apprehension of his own Nothingness and Unworthiness ; such 'tis like, as the *Centurion* in the Gospel had, when he thought himself not Worthy to come to Christ, or that so Divine a Guest should come to him. For we cannot well suppose a Man, of his Military Life and Education, to have gone so far into the detail of Self-knowledge, as to have made nice and minute Reflections upon himself with a Contemplative Exactness. Nor is the Bulk of Mankind to be supposed capable of this. But he had a general
Know-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 57

Knowledge of himself, as appears by the Sense he express'd of his own Unworthiness ; and so must every one have that is truly Humble, or else I cannot tell what should make him so. If you say the Grace of God, 'Tis true, the Grace of God does dispose us to Humility, as it does to every thing else that is Good ; but then 'tis by bringing us to a right Understanding of our selves that it does so, even as the Grace of God that disposes us to *Repentance*, does it by working in us a due sense of what we are to Repent of ; so that the immediate Ground of our Humility, is still the Knowledge of our selves. And tho' it be not necessary, that every Man should know himself with exactness to be Humble, since then Humility would be a Vertue only for the Contemplative, and above the reach of the far greater part of Mankind, yet I must say, that as some Measure of this Knowledge is necessary, so the more carefully a Man studies himself, and the more exactness he arrives to in the Knowledge of himself, the better Grounded his Humility will be.

16. The short is, we Judge as we Think, as we Conceive, as we Apprehend of the Nature of things. And Humility being a certain Judgment which we make of our selves, it follows, that to Judge rightly of our selves, we must first rightly understand our selves. And if we do rightly understand our selves,
we

58 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

we shall Naturally be carried to Judge Rightly, that is, Meanly and Lowly of our selves, which is the same as to be Humble. And so the Knowledge of our selves, is the Foundation of Humility. And upon this, I suppose, is grounded that common Expression, when we say of Proud Men that they do not understand themselves, or that they ought to be made to know themselves better, implying, that that would make them Humble. And accordingly, of those whom we conceive to be so, we say again, that they do understand themselves very well, implying again, that unless they did so, they would not be as they are. And in this

*In Evang. Jo.
Tract. 25.*

sense, I presume that of St. *Austin* is to be understood, when he says, *Tota Humilitas tua est ut Cognasces te*, All thy Humility is for thee to know thy self. Not as if Humility and the Knowledge of our selves were formally the same, for 'tis plain that they are two distinct things; but only that the Knowledge of our selves is the proper Ground and Foundation of Humility, as indeed it is. As if he had said, all that thou hast to do to be Humble, is to have a right Knowledge of thy self. And accordingly we find, that those that understand themselves best, are always most Humble.

17. But then if the Knowledge of our selves
be

A Treatise concerning Humility. 59

be the Foundation of Humility, then in the first place, here is a Reflection that offers it self to our Consideration and Compassion at once, *viz. How very few there are that do indeed know themselves to any purpose.* The rareness of Humility (as certainly nothing is more rare) shews how little Men generally understand themselves, as much as they pretend to Knowledge. In that they Pride themselves, but if they truly had it, they would not be Proud, but Humble; which since they are not, we may reasonably conclude how little they have of the other. For what is it, but want of having a right Knowledge of themselves, that makes Men so High and Proud, so Haughty and Insolent, so Vain and Phantastic, as they too often are? If Men did truly know themselves, as they would see enough in themselves to be Low-minded and Humble, so they would undoubtedly be so; and therefore, since they are generally so much otherwise, what further Evidence is there wanting to satisfy us, how very rare, and thin-sown, this Self-knowledge is in the World. For these things shew one another, and measure one another. And therefore what St. James says as to Wisdom at large, *Who is a wise Man and endued with Knowledge amongst you? let him shew out of a good Conversation, his works with meekness of Wisdom,* the like may be here said of the Knowledge
of

60 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

of our selves ; if any Man knows himself, or pretends to know himself, let him shew this his Wisdom by his Humility, and if he does not so shew it, we may conclude that he has none to shew.

18. Then again, Secondly, if the Knowledge of our selves be the Foundation of Humility, we are upon this Occasion led further to observe, that if we would be possess'd of that great Christian Vertue, without which all Goodness is but a Name, a Form, and a Shadow, we are here Instructed where to lay the Foundation of it, *viz.* in the Knowledge of our selves. Which accordingly we are concern'd to endeavour after, not only as an Ornament or Accomplishment, but as a thing of a Moral and Conscientious importance. The Apostle indeed says, that *Knowledge puffs up*. But what Knowledge is it that does so ? Not certainly the Knowledge of our selves, nor indeed any other, but only as it partakes of Ignorance. A slight superficial Tincture of Knowledge, a smattering as we call it, when Men see a great many things confusely, as in their Sleep, and nothing distinctly ; this indeed does puff up, and is that very thing which makes Men Fops and Coxcombs ; to the Composition of which, some Grains of Knowledge are perhaps a necessary Ingredient, since neither a down-right Fool, nor a thorough wise Man, can be well supposed

A Treatise concerning Humility. 61

posed capable of that Character. But then 'tis not because they know so much that they are so, but because they know no more. And therefore 'tis not Knowledge as Knowledge, but Knowledge as it partakes of Ignorance, that is the Occasion of their Vanity. Whereof this is a Demonstration, that if you increase the Dose by adding more, you Cure it; which plainly shews where the ground of the Distemper lay. For if Knowledge as Knowledge did puff up, then the Wiser Men grew the more Vain and Proud they would be, which is against all Reason and Experience. Besides that after all, if that were the natural effect of Knowledge to make Men Proud, then as all our own Endeavours after it would be Criminal, so that Grace of God which *Enlightens* (which is a considerable part of the Grace of God) would contribute to our Sin, and the Holy Spirit of God would do ill to express Goodness and Vertue by *Wisdom*, and Vice and Wickedness by *Folly*; nor could we innocently or safely follow the Exhortation of the Apostle, to *add to our Vertue Knowledge*. But 'tis so far otherwise, that indeed Knowledge is the Fund of all Goodness, and the surest Friend to all Piety and Vertue. The Knowledge of God to the Love of God, and the Knowledge of our selves to Humility. And as 'tis for want of knowing God that we love him so little, and serve him so indif-

62 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

differently, so 'tis for want of knowing themselves that Men are so Vain and Foppish, so Impertinent and Pragmatical, so Assuming and Undertaking, so forward to Speak, and so slow to Hear, and expose themselves by such a World of Absurdities as they do. For the avoiding of all which, let it be thy Care, thy Study, thy Practice, thy continual Exercise, to *know thy self*.

19 Descend then into thy own Breast, search all the corners of it, and seek out thy Fugitive self, that Wanderer, that Stranger, that great Deceiver, that Heart of thine that is Deceitful above all things, and that so hates the Light, and avoids coming to it, lest its Deceits should be discovered, and its Wickedness should be reprov'd. But let him not hide himself from thee ; and when thou hast found him, strip him of all the Disguises of Self-love, of all the Ornaments of Flattery, and of the whole Artifice of Hypocrisy. Inquire into the naked Truth of thy self, and view thy self as thou art in thy self, and never give over thy Inquiry till the great Mystery of Iniquity be Reveal'd, till thou hast open'd the Seal'd Book of thy own Heart, and hast manifested thy self to thy self. And for this end and purpose, be much alone, in Solitude and Retirement, which is the true School of Wisdom, especially of this Wisdom, the Knowledge of our selves. For sure to
know

A Treatise concerning Humility. 63

know our selves the most Natural and Direct way, must be to converse much with our selves. Conversing in the World will never teach us the true Knowledge of our selves, whatever other improvements it may pretend to have in its Gift. For there, besides that Distraction and Dissipation of Thought, whereby the variety of sensible Impressions will be continually calling us out of our selves, some will Flatter us, and some will Detract from us ; some will immoderately Commend us, and others will as unreasonably Cheapen and Undervalue us ; so that we shall never be able to see the true State of our selves, in such an unsteady Glass as the World holds out to our View. Therefore let us retire from it, and as St.

Bernard expresses it, *Studeamus* Sermo de Obedientia, Patientia, & Sapientia.
liquando furari nosmet-ipsos, endeavour sometimes to steal

away our selves, and then as it is in the *Psalmist*, to Commune with our own Heart and search out our Spirit. For in short, as the Knowledge of our selves is the Foundation of Humility, so the best way to come to this Knowledge, is self Reflection ; and the best Opportunity for that, is Solitude and Retreat.

20. If Conversation were never so much better than it is for the improvement either of our Minds or Manners, if instead of Curiosity

64 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

riosity and Cenforiousness, which too often fill up those Vacancies in Discourse which Lewdness and Profaneness have left, the Discourses of Men did abound never so much with Wisdom and Prudence, Piety and Charity, and were not such insipid things as they generally are, but *season'd with Salt*, as the Apostle tells us they should, yet even then it would be necessary sometimes to retire from the World for the Knowledge of our selves, which must be learnt by Reflections of our own, and not by the Discourses of others. . But as the Spirit of the World now is, and as the vein of its Conversation generally runs, I think there is no great Good to be got by Conversing in it, and that our own Company is much better, especially for the bringing us acquainted with our selves, from whom the Conversation of the World does but estrange us. There our Eyes are upon others, and our Minds are engaged in observing what they say, and what they do, which diverts us from the Consideration, and consequently from the Knowledge of our selves. That's a Science to be Studied and Learnt at home, the School of the World cannot pretend to Teach it.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

The Reasonableness of Humility, wherein the particular Reasons why we should be Humble are consider'd.

1. **M**AN being a Reasonable Creature, expects, and has a Right to demand a Reason for every thing that he is either to believe or do, since without it he can do neither. Not only in Philosophic Truth and Theory, but even in Matters of pure Faith, where the Reason of the thing it self (as believed) is not regarded, nay, even in Matters that are *above Reason*, where we comprehend not the manner or possibility of the Article ; even in these things there must be a Reason to induce us to yield our Assent, though not from within, or the nature of the thing it self, yet from without, *viz.* the *Authority* of the Proposer. For Faith, tho' in some Respects distinguished from Reason, is yet Absolutely consider'd a Rational Act, and the Reason and Motive of it must be Clear, tho' the Object of it may be Obscure, or else either there will be no Assent given, or he that gives it believes like a Fool. But much more may a Reason be required in matters of Practice, where we have the Opposi-
F tion

66 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

tion of Lusts and Passions to contend with, and to the doing of which, we are led by no Principle of Natural Inclination. Here will be the greater need of Reason to supply this Defect, and to counterpoise that Difficulty. And therefore having in the Two former Chapters shewn what Humility is, and the Foundation upon which it stands, whenever and wherever it actually is, let us now consider the Reason *why* it should be, that so the Foundation may not be without a Building.

2. Now though whatever makes for the Advantage of Humility, that is indeed, that shews how Humility makes for our Advantage, may in a large sense come within the compass of the reasonableness of Humility, as being a good Reason why we should be Humble, in which Sense the *excellency* and *necessity* of Humility will be a part of its *Reasonableness*; yet designing to consider those Matters distinctly by themselves, by the Reasonableness of Humility, I here think more proper to intend such Considerations or Arguments for it, as are taken from our selves, and the circumstances of our own Condition only. For Humility being a Low Opinion of our selves, the Reason why we should be Humble, must be the same as the Reason *why* we should think Lowly of our selves. And it seems most proper, that what is to make us think thus Lowly of our selves, or which
is

A Treatise concerning Humility. 67

is to be a Reason why we should do so, should be something in or belonging to our selves. Now there are a great many Reasons of this Nature, why we should be Humble, too many indeed to be all particularly consider'd; and some are too Obvious and Popular to be insisted upon; and therefore to be as Brief as may be in so Copious an Argument, I shall touch only upon the chiefest things, and that too in their *Generals*, reducing what I have to offer to these Four General Heads, which perhaps will comprehend all that is considerable, at least all that is necessary to be consider'd in this matter.

- I. *The Reason Man has to be Humble, consider'd as a Creature.*
- II. *The Reason he has to be Humble, consider'd as a sinful Creature.*
- III. *The Reason he has to be Humble, consider'd as a Creature under certain natural Infirmities and Imperfections.*
- IV. *The Reason he has to be Humble, as having received all his Good from God.*

These are all very Humbling Considerations, some one way, and some another; and that we may proceed the more orderly in them, we will dispose of them in so many distinct Sections as follows.

68 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

S E C T. I.

*The First Argument for Humility, taken from
the Consideration of Man as a Creature.*

1. **T**HIS, though not the first thing that is conceivable in Man, (for we must conceive him as a *Being* in order of Nature, before we conceive him as a *Created Being*) yet it is the first thing in him that can be fitly used as an Argument to shew the reasonableness of his being Humble. For if you consider him barely as a Being, there is no reason why he should be Humble upon that Account, *Being* as such importing no Imperfection, but the quite contrary. But no sooner do you consider him as a *Creature*, but the reason of his Humility begins to appear. So that Humility seems to have been very early in securing a Right to our Duty and Observance ; and though it be one of the latest Vertues that we practice, as depending upon the Knowledge of our selves, which Men seldom arrive to till the shadows begin to lengthen ; yet 'tis one of the first that demands our regard, since the reason of it as it is *from* our selves, so it begins also *with* our selves.

2. 'Tis true indeed, that a Creature as such, implies no Sin in it ; and accordingly, *Creature*

A Treatise concerning Humility. 69

ture and *Sinner* are here set down as two distinct Heads of Argument. Nothing Evil or Sinful can come out of the hands of God, who is Holy in all his Works, as well as Righteous in all his Ways. And therefore all Creation must be a state of Innocence, and every Creature as a Creature must be Innocent or Sinless. Again, as a Creature implies no Sin in it, so neither does it any natural Faultiness or Deformity. For God making all things with the best Art, and according to the best Patterns, even those Eternal and Immutable Reasons of things which are in his own infinite Mind, must needs make them all perfect in their Kinds. And accordingly he that made them, so pronounces of them. And therefore no Creature as such can be faulty, nor ought to be so esteemed by us. And accordingly St. *Austin* confesses it as a fault in himself that he had found fault with part of God's Creation, and censures the doing so as Unsound, and as it

were Unorthodox. *Non est san-* *Confess. Lib. 7.*
Chap. 14.
mitas eis quibus displicet aliquid

Creatura tuæ, sicut mihi non erat cum displicerent multa quæ fecisti. And this he condemns as finding fault with God himself, when he gives this as the reason of his running into the (*Manichean*) error of the two Principles, because he was unwilling to acknowledge that to be God's which displeased him, and that

70 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

that lest God himself should thereby
ibid. also displease him. *Et quia non audebat anima mea ut ei displiceret Deus meus, nolbat esse tui quicquid ei displicebat, & indicat in Opinionem duarum substantiarum, &c.* But now if the Creature as such did imply any natural faultiness in it, then 'tis certain that all the Creatures would partake of it, all that God has made or can ever make; nor could any of them have been perfect in their kinds; and then St. *Austin* would have been very favourable as to his Censure in finding fault only with *some* of them.

3. It must therefore be acknowledged that Creature as Creature, implies no faultiness in it whether Natural or Moral, and consequently that so far it can be no competent reason why a Man should be Humble, or take up a mean Opinion of himself, to consider himself under the Notion of a *Creature*. But still, though a Creature as such, implies no Faultiness, because God can make nothing that is truly Faulty, yet it bespeaks *Imperfection* at large. It is not only capable of it, but formally imports it. Not indeed in a *privative* sense, as if the Creatures wanted any Perfection that belonged to them to have, for then they would not be perfect in their respective kinds, and so properly faulty, as not being conformable to their *Ideas*; but in a *Negative* sense, that is, that though they
 are

A Treatise concerning Humility. 71

are perfect in their measure and order, yet absolutely, and upon the whole, they are imperfect, there being a world of Perfection which they have not, though they have what their Nature requires, as appears by comparing them with the absolutely perfect Author of their Being, between whom and them the distance is so great, and the disproportion so unmeasurably vast, that they are as nothing in comparison of him. *Mine Age is even as nothing in respect of thee, Psal. 39.* So that there is deficiency enough in the very notion of a Creature, to furnish us with a great many humbling Considerations. I shall touch upon a few of them.

4. First then a Creature is a *Contingent Being*, that is, a Being that might not have been, or that was not at all necessary to be, as having no Principle or Foundation for that necessity, either in its self, or in its Cause. *Not in it self*, even by the very Supposition. For by a Creature, we understand something that is produced out of nothing, something now in being that once was not. But if it had in it self any Principle of necessary Existence, then it would always be, since what necessarily is, always is, and so could never from not Being pass into Being, contrary to what the very Notion of a Creature supposes. *Not in its Cause*, and that even by the Supposition of that Cause. For as the Creature is not

72 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

perfect enough to exist necessarily, or of it self, so God is too perfect to produce him after that manner. For God is a perfect good to himself, and is perfectly happy in himself, and infinitely sufficient for himself, and so cannot be under any necessity to will any thing out of himself, nor consequently to produce any Creature, as having no need of him. Who therefore can have no principle of necessary Being at all, neither in himself nor in the will of his Creator, and so is all over *Contingent*. But now what an humbling, what a debasing Consideration must this be, for a Man to reflect, any Man, even the greatest Man upon Earth, that with all the Height and Grandeur wherewith he is Born, entring the World as *Agrippa* and *Bernice* did the Court of Judicature *μετὰ πολλῆς πομπῆς* with great Pomp, or with all the State and Splendor wherein he Lives, Shines and Flourishes, and with all the Marks and Characters of Honour and Dignity which he wears ; in the midst of all his Wealth, all his Power, all his Glory, and if you will, all his *Wisdom* too, which is more valuable than all the rest ; in the midst of all these, I say, to reflect, that he is still one of those Beings that might never have *been, known, or heard* of. That not only his Quality and Greatness, but even he himself, who is now so distinguish'd by them, might never have been.

A Treatise concerning Humility. 73

been. That Being was not at all Essential to his Nature, and that that Glorious Being to whom it is, whose very Essence is to be, and whose Name is, *I am*, had no need of him. So that if the Infinite Power that made him, had not been as Infinite in Goodness too, and so willing to communicate of his Happiness, he had lain in Silence and Emptiness, a pure Nothing to all Eternity. For out of that was he taken, and to that, if left to himself, he must return. Which leads me to something further Observable in a Creature, which is,

Secondly, That as he is a Contingent Being, such as might not have been, so when he is, he is from *Nothing*. For that's the very notion of Creation, by which we understand a Production of something out of nothing. Not as Nothing signifies the *Matter* out of which, but only the *Term* from whence the Production commences. For Creation supposes nothing. Art indeed does, and Nature does too, neither of which can work without some sort of Materials ; but Creation does not, as being a Production of the *whole* Being, and not a change of it from one manner of Being to another. But now to the whole Being of a thing, nothing can be conceiv'd as Antecedent, but not Being. But then what a sinking dispiriting thought again must it be for a Man to reflect with himself, though

74 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

though never so great, and never so proud of his greatness, that whatever he is, or however he appears at present, he once was not, and had not so much as a Being in the World, but was made out of Nothing, a State as I may say so repugnant to Being, that he needed no less than an Infinite Power to make him to be. When we would humble a Man whose Pride we cannot well otherwise Cure, and find too insulting to bear, we commonly mind him of the Baseness of his Original or Parentage, this being what Men are apt to boast of ; and so a touch here is thought to hit Pride in the most sensible part, to prick it in the very *Nerve*. But now what Original so mean, so low, as to be from *Nothing* ! To say that we are all from *Adam*, though a levelling Consideration enough for those who value themselves upon the little distinctions of Birth, Quality, or Fortune, is yet nothing to this. For that is only to say that in the Original our nature is the same, however we distinguish our selves by Accidental differences. But then this Original is *something*, and so we are the same in *something*. But to say that we all take our Rise from *Nothing*, a pure empty Nothing, what can be so degradingly mean as this ? And yet this is the truth of our Condition. Men boast of their Families and Pedigrees, but they would find little reason to do so if they would

A Treatise concerning Humility. 75

would trace them far enough back ; for then they would find *Nothing* at the end of them. And if this makes the Herald's Office a mere jest, I know not well how to help it. For 'tis certain that our true Coat bears *nothing*. And that's a Coat that's soon Blazon'd. Families and Pedigrees make a great noise in the world, and a great deal of the Pride and Vanity of Human Nature runs in that Channel, but when all's done, *Nothing* is the Womb of us all ; and however we may value our selves upon having God for our Father, 'tis certain, that we derive our Pedigree by our Mother's side, from Darknes and Emptiness, yea, even from *Nothing* it self. And as we cannot justly pretend higher, so lower we cannot descend.

6. This Consideration may admit of this further improvement to render it yet more Humbling, that we were not only made out of *Nothing*, but lay so long in it before we were made. That we were made so *lately*, not till the other day in a manner, and that the great Wheel of Eternity had described such innumerable Revolutions of Ages, before we had any other Being than in the Divine Fore-knowledge and Predestination. Or if this should be thought not so Philosophically express'd, as attributing Succession to Eternity, yet this however must be allowed as a severe Truth, that all Creation
im-

76 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

imports a novelty of Being, since even Time it self is a Novelty to Eternity. And whether the World might have been made sooner or no, or whatever be said of our first Parents, whose entrance into it was so near the beginning of it, yet 'tis certain, that of the after Ages of the World, and of us especially that now bring up the Rear of their Posterity, it may with strictness be affirm'd, that we are but of *Yesterday*. Antiquity is the great boast and glory of Families, and the common subject of their Emulation. But 'tis a ridiculous Contention, for in the truest and most momentous sense, we are all but *upstarts*. And what great matter is it to have our Quality Antient, when even our Being it self is new and of so late a Date. But then as 'tis enough to take down the spirit of the stoutest and loftiest of the Sons of Pride, to think that nothing is his Original, so must it, one would think, yet further, to reflect that so many Ages have past before he could come out of this Nothing, before he had a Being in Nature, or could have so much as a *place* among the Creatures. But much more yet, if this Creature that might not have been at all, that is now from nothing, and that so lately, has such a natural bent and tendency to Nothing again, that he would immediately relapse into it, if the same Almighty Cause that extracted him
thence,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 77

thence, did not as by a continually repeated Creation, preserve him from it.

7. For that also in the last place the notion of a Creature involves. A Creature is also a *Dependent* Being, that is, it is Essential to a Creature to depend upon the Author of its Being for every moment of its continuance in it, and that not only *Permissively*, so as to remain no longer in Being than it shall please him that gave it not to deprive him of it, for of that there can be no doubt ; but also *positively*, as needing the actual and continual influence of him to sustain and preserve him in Being, who as the Author to the *Hebrews* tells us, *upholds all things by the word of his Power, Heb. 1. 3.* The Creature must be upheld as well as made, and that by the same Almighty Arm that made it, or else it must necessarily sink into its original Nothing, being no more able to preserve it self from it, than it was to bring it self out of it. Nor is this to be look'd upon only as a Pious Doctrine, Honestly and Religiously meant, for the greater Glorification of God, and the Humiliation of the Creature, but as a strict Philosophic Truth. And accordingly, we find *St. Paul* insisting upon it in his Discourse with the Philosophers of *Athens*, telling them, that *in him we live, and move, as well as have our Being, Acts 17.*

78 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

8. I do not think it proper either to fill, or to perplex a practical Discourse with a just prosecution of an Argument so Scholastic as this is, nor yet wholly to pass over a thing of such importance to our Subject, and wherein the reasonableness of Humility is so nearly concern'd. I shall therefore only touch upon a Consideration or two, which I hope may suffice to make it plain, I will not say to the meanest, but to an ordinary Capacity, that so it must needs be. Thus then, Existence is not of the Essence of a Creature, or it is not Essential to a Creature to be, that is, when you think upon a Creature, you do not find actual Being in that Thought, I mean in the Object of that Thought. Indeed when we think upon God, we find that Being is included in the very Idea or Notion which we have of him, that it is of his very Essence as we say, whence it is that he defines himself *by* it, and takes his Great and Incommunicable Name from it. But it is not so in the Creature, in whose Essence Being is not included, and to whom therefore whenever he is, it is Contingent to be. A Creature therefore is a Contingent Being, and that has in its nature no Principle or Foundation of necessary Existence; besides that if it had, it would always be, and so be no Creature, as was noted before. But then, that which has in it self no principle of necessary Existence,
(as

A Treatise concerning Humility. 79

(as a Creature to whom it is not Essential to be has not) may as to any Power it has in it self to the contrary, not be, and consequently cannot preserve it self from not being, and therefore must be preserv'd by a Power superiour to its self, or else it will actually not be, which is the same as to say, that it needs the Divine Influence for its support in Being, so as not to be able to subsist without it. The Proposition I would conclude.

9. You will say then at this rate, if the Creature so depends upon God for the continuance of his Being, then for the Annihilation of him, there will need no more than for God to withdraw that his conservative Influence, and so not to Uphold will be the same as to Annihilate. It is confess'd, and you gather rightly. And if it be *otherwise* proved (or else we shall reason in a Circle) that this is indeed the only conceivable way of Annihilation, then it will follow again as well backwards, that the Creature does so depend upon God. Now as

to this, hear what the great Metaphysician says; *Every po-*

Suarez. Met. Tom. 1.
Disput. 21. Sect. 1.

sitive Action necessarily tends to some Being or other; and therefore if God should want such an Action for the Annihilation of things, he could never Annihilate them. And therefore that he may be able to do so, it is necessary that
he

80 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

he should be able to do it by an Abstraction of Action only. And if this bare Abstraction of the Divine Influence only be enough to annihilate the Creature, then this plainly shews, that the Conservation of the Creature in Being depends upon that Influence, which is also the consequence that *Suarez* deduces from that Principle.

10. This Argument may be otherwise managed, and is put in another, perhaps better, light by a Person of excellent Thought and profound Meditation, who thus refines upon it. Man is but a pure Nothing by himself. He is not, but only because it is God's will that he should be. And if God should only cease to will that he should be, he would be no more. For if God can annihilate his Creatures, 'tis not by willing positively that they should *not* be, for God cannot positively will *Nothing*, which has no manner of good in it. But he may destroy them by ceasing to will that they *should* be. And that because the Creatures not containing in them all goodness, or all that is good, are not invincibly or necessarily lovely; and also because God possesses in himself even all that they have of Perfection and Goodness.

11. These two Arguments (for they are two different ways of arguing, though upon the same common ground) do proceed both upon this Supposition, which no doubt is
true,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 81

true, that God can Annihilate whatever he has made. And in this they also both agree, that though it be within the compass of Almighty Power to be able so to do, yet that Annihilation it self is no positive Act of power, but only a cessation of such an Act. Herein 'tis on both sides agreed, the difference is only in the ways of proving it. But then if this be the manner of Annihilation, that is, if this alone be sufficient to reduce a Creature to nothing, that the Divine Influence be suspended or withdrawn from it (which seems also intimated by those words of the *Psalmist*, *when thou hidest thy face they are troubled*) *Psal.* 104. This very plainly shews, that 'tis upon that Influence that it depends for its support and stay in Being. If upon the taking this away the Creation immediately falls, then 'tis plain that upon this it stands, and that he that made the World is the true *Atlas* that sustains it. A Doctrine that has so much Foundation in Philosophy, and is of such consequence to Piety and Religion, that it is not to be disown'd by any one who pretends to Orthodoxy in either; and accordingly, even *Durandus* himself, as low as he goes in stating the Dependency of the Creatures upon God, did not however think fit to deny their owing to him the conservation of their *Natures* and *Powers*, though

G he

*Lib. 2. Distinct. 1.
Quæst. 5.*

82 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

he leaves them too much to themselves afterwards as to their *Operations*.

12. I might shew also the Dependency of the Creature as to *that*, and particularly how Man depends upon God, both as to the motions of his Body, and as to the thoughts of his Mind, taking that of *St. Paul* for my Ground, that in him we *Move*, as well as Live and have our Being ; but fearing lest this should engage me too far in School-niceties and Philosophical Notions, such as would rather amuse than instruct the ordinary Reader, (there being hardly in all Philosophy, a more nice Point than that of the *Divine Concourse*) I think it most adviseable to decline that part, and to leave both the thing it self and its proper improvement, to the consideration of the Learned, not judging it so convenient an Entertainment for a Practical Discourse, wherein the Capacity of the Reader is to be regarded, as well as what the Subject it self may admit or require.

13. Well, but now what a weak feeble thing is a Creature, that even while he is, so far partakes of nothing at the same time, as not to be able to stand by himself, without leaning upon the Rock of Ages ; and what little reason has any Creature to be proud of any Excellency or Perfection, or if he be, how must it Humble and Mortifie him in the midst of all his vain Complacencies, to
think

A Treatise concerning Humility. 83

think what an infirm and precarious Title he has, not only to those Excellencies, but even to that which is the very bottom and foundation of all, *Being* it self. And may we not fitly apply to this what the Apostle says in another Case and Sense, *If thou boast, thou bearest not the Root, but the Root thee, Rom. 11. 18.* Indeed the Root of all Being is in God, who only has Life and Immortality essentially belonging to him ; and if this Root does but withdraw or suspend the Communications of its sap, the strongest and most flourishing Branch must necessarily wither away into nothing. An humbling thought indeed, and such, as methinks the Pride of no Creature, not even *Lucifer* himself, should be able to withstand, or even encounter, to think that as he was once Nothing, so he needs only a mere, naked, *unarm'd* Negative to remand him to nothing again. God spake the word indeed before he was made, but to unmake him he need only be silent, and not sustain him by the word of his Power. And was Pride made for such a Being as this ? No, Pride was not made for Man, no nor for Angels neither. And 'tis enough to humble not only the greatest Man upon Earth, but the mightiest Angel in Heaven, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities or Powers, to Reflect upon the Infirmary and Imbecility of their *Creature-*

84 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

ly State, the Contingency of it, the Original of it, and the constant Dependency of it, that they might not have been, are from Nothing, and would immediately fall into Nothing again if left to themselves ; being no more able then to stand, than the most helpless Infant is, when the Nurse removes the necessary stay and support of her Arms from it. Only with this difference, that the Child without the Nurse falls only to the *Ground*, but the Creature forsaken of God, falls to *Nothing*.

14. Pride therefore must needs be a very uncreaturely Sin, and Man must have great reason to be Humble, if he were only to look upon himself as a *Creature*. This indeed, is the most favourable and advantageous side on which he can take a prospect of himself, as having many excellent Beings agreeing with him in this common Consideration, of whose Company he need not be ashamed ; and yet this alone, without entring into a more particular Survey of himself, is enough to make him Humble, especially when he compares himself with the *Central Stability*, and immoveable Subsistence of that Great and Glorious Being, who is necessarily, and therefore independently, every way Perfect and Self-sufficient, both for *Being* and for *Happiness*. Before this Adorable Excellence and Majestic Essence, before whom the Angels

A Treatise concerning Humility. 85

gels cover their Faces, ought Man especially to Humble himself with the most prostrate Devotion, with the lowest Debasements both of Soul and Body, as being nothing without him, and nothing to him, to whom the whole Creation bears no proportion, and is as it were a mere *Point* that has no parts, to whom the things that are not are as though they were, and the things that are, as though they were not. This therefore is the sentiment of Mind which it becomes Man to put on ; this the posture of Soul which he ought to take both as to God and himself, and all this though he were as perfect a Creature as any Creature can be, or as perfect as God made him ; though he had continued in his native Innocence, and original Integrity, without staining his Virgin Purity, or degrading the Honour of his Nature, yet even in this state of Innocence, when Naked and not Ashamed, he needed however to be *Cloath'd with Humility*, and the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit. But much more does he need that Cloathing and that Ornament, now he is a degenerate Creature and a Sinner, now he has *Shame* to be cover'd as well as *Nakedness*.

86 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

S E C T. II.

*The Second Argument for Humility, taken from
the consideration of Man as a Sinful Creature.*

I. **T**IS a sad Addition that Sinner makes to Creature, an Addition that detracts from it, but which adds very much to the Reason of his being Humble. A Sinner has much more Reason to be Humble than a Creature, and must descend to a far lower degree of Self-abasement, or else he will take a place much too high for him, and have the Accession of Pride to aggravate his Wickedness. A Creature is indeed from Nothing, but a Sinner deserves to be Nothing ; and 'tis the Infinite Mercy of God through the interposal of a Mediator, that keeps him from being so here, and the Justice of God with the Immutability of his Counsels, that keeps Him from being so hereafter. God wills nothing but with infinite Reason and Wisdom, and so the Counsels of his Will are Immutable : 'Tis not fit a Being acting so Wisely, should undo what he has done, make and unmake, not consequently, that he should Annihilate any of his Creatures. Accordingly, he supports them all in that Being which he gave them, so that not even the least Atom of matter perishes. But yet still, a Sinner
justly

A Treatise concerning Humility. 87

justly forfeits his Being, as not acting answerably to the end of it ; however, for great and wise Reasons, God may not think fit to take the forfeit. A Creature again bespeaks Imperfection, not the want of any Perfection that is due to it, (as being perfect in its kind) but only Imperfection at large, as indeed it must necessarily be, or else there would be no difference between the Creature and the Creator. But now a Sinner is a deform'd Being, a disorderly Creature, a *Monster*. For a Monster, properly, is not an imperfect Creature at large, (for all Creatures are so, and a perfect Creature would be a Monster indeed) but a Creature that is imperfect in its kind, that is, that wants some perfection due to that Order or Species of Being ; or more plainly, that is, not conformable to its *Idea*. That I take to be properly what we call a *Monster*. Now so is a Sinner, or the Man who is a Sinner. He is not only Negatively, but Privatively Imperfect, he wants that Perfection which belongs to his Nature, and which such a sort of Creature as he is, ought to have. Only he is in his Mind that which a Monster is in his Body ; that in Grace, which the other is in Nature, and so is by far the greater Monster of the Two.

2. But to continue this Comparison a little further. The Creature is the work of God, and such a work as he approves. But the

88 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Sinner is his *own* work, a Creature as it were of his own making. For God makes no Sinner, he only supports him in that Being which he gave him. As he is not the Author of Sin himself, so neither does he make any Man to be the Author of it. God makes the Creature, but 'tis Man himself that makes the Sinner, by consenting to the suggestions of the Devil, or by complying with the perverse Inclinations of his own corrupt Nature. Again, that Imperfection which is in the Creature, arises from the very inward Constitution and Condition of its Nature, the very Essentials of its Being, and so is necessary and unavoidable, not from want of Power or Skill in God to make his work perfect, but from the natural incapacity of the thing it self to be so; whereas that Deformity and Disorder which is in a Sinner, is owing to his own free Choice, and results from the voluntary determination of his Will, whereby he chuses to spoil and corrupt the work of his Creator, and to make that Crooked and Deformed, which he made Right and Beautiful, and so is the just Object of his Hatred and Displeasure. And indeed it is God only who sees him in his full Deformity, that can hate him as he deserves to be hated. In fine, a Creature is Innocent and Faultless, but a Sinner is Guilty and Impure, and stands Condemn'd by the Law of God for his Disobedience to it.

A Treatise concerning Humility. 89

it. And as a Creature is Innocent, so he may be Excellently Great and Good, and there are Creatures that are both ; but a Sinner is neither, being both the worst, and the least and most contemptible thing in the World. The best side of him is *Confession* and *Repentance* ; but still, that is but making the best of what is bad, and Repentance comes short of Innocence. And therefore if Creatures, even as Creatures, have reason to be Humble, much more has the Sinner ; and if those Creatures are Humble who never Sinn'd, (as certainly they must be, or else they would not be where they are, since Pride turn'd the Angels out of Heaven) then how much greater reason have those Creatures to be poor in Spirit, and lowly in heart, *who have all sinn'd*, as the Apostle says, *and so come short of the Glory of God*, *Rom. 3. 23.* both of his Praise and Acceptance here, and (without any further Provision) of the Enjoyment of him in Glory hereafter.

3. But this Reason appears no where so moving and perswasive, as in the Example of the Son of God, the Man Christ Jesus. Christ, as Man, was a Creature perfectly Innocent. *He did no Sin*, as the Scripture says, *neither was Guile found in his mouth.* And yet his Innocence, as perfect as it was, did not exempt him from Humility ; and though he had no Sin to be Humbled for, yet he had
more

90 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

more Humility than ever had any *Sinner* ; was as perfectly Humble as Innocent, even up to the perfection of a Rule and an Example. And accordingly he proposes himself as such, in that very particular Vertue, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.* And this, though he was not only an innocent Creature, but a Creature in that degree of Excellence and Sublimity, as never any Creature was, being the Son of God, not only as Conceiv'd by the Holy Ghost in the Womb of the Virgin, but also as personally United to the very Godhead. And yet this not only most Innocent, but Divine Person, was also the most Humble Person in the World. *Nemo*

*De passione Dom.
Sermo.*

illo sublimior, nemo humilior, as says St. Bernard, none more Sublime than he, and none more Humble than he. But then if a Person so Innocent and so Divine, was at the same time so Humble, to what low Degrees of Humility ought we to descend, how ought we to be Cloath'd with it, or rather Buried in it, who are not only Creatures, but miserable Sinners.

4. But to consider the thing a little Absolutely in it self. Sin is the greatest of all Evils, and the cause of all the Evil that is in the World. 'Tis what always is to be Repented of, and consequently what absolutely and never ought to be, in no Case or
Sup

A Treatise concerning Humility. 91

Supposition whatsoever, not for the procuring the greatest Good, or for the avoiding the greatest Evil ; which shews, that it is it self the greatest of all, since otherwise it might be Eligible for the avoiding of that which is greater. 'Tis that which is against Truth, against Order, and against Reason, as well as against the Law and Authority of God. Against the truth of Things, against the order of the Universe, and against the reason of all the intelligent part of it. For as there is a natural difference in things, that some of them are for our good, and some for our hurt, (which is the fundamental ground of Morality) so God in giving his Laws, has followed this distinction in nature, commanding us what is naturally conducive to our good, and forbidding the contrary. So that Sin is not only a Transgression of the Law, but of a most Just, Righteous, and Reasonable Law, that Law of God which *is the Truth*, as the *Psalmist* calls it, *Psal.* 119. and so has a natural, as well as a positive Foulness. A Consideration, which if duly weighed, will be found very highly to aggravate the Sinfulness of Sin, and to inflame the Guilt of the Sinner.

5. And that there must be some extraordinary Evil in it, how ready soever some Fools may be to make a Mock and a Jest of it, we may be further satisfied, if we consider that 'tis the only thing that God hates, and that
sepa-

92 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

separates from the Communion of his Beatific Presence. God who is Love it self, does yet hate Sin, and that Infinitely, as contrary to his Blessed and Absolutely perfect self, to the Essential Truth and Justice of his own Nature, which he Infinitely loves. And as we may judge what an Evil Sin is by God's hating it, so how and in what degree God hates it, there is another measure for us to conclude, besides that of the Infinite Love which he bears to himself and his own Perfections. For we may measure God's hatred of Sin, by the very same line wherewith St. *John* does his Love towards Mankind. *God so loved the World*, says St. *John*, *that he gave his only begotten Son*, &c. And so may we also say, *God so hated Sin*, that he gave his only Begotten Son to be a Sacrifice and an Attonement for it. He so hated it as not Absolutely to pardon it, that is, not to let it go wholly unpunished. And though his Infinite Mercy inclined him to pardon it to the Sinner, yet his Justice would not suffer him to do it without a Satisfaction, and such a Satisfaction, as neither the Sinner himself, nor any other mere Creature was able to make; and so the Son of God was fain to Suffer and Dye, that the Sinner might be Pardon'd and Live. And therefore upon the whole, it may be truly said that God so hated Sin, as not to pardon it without the Death and
Pas-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 93

Passion of his own Son. And what a Hatred was this ! And how forcibly express'd, when written in such *Bloody Characters* ! Indeed the Cross of Christ is an Eternal Monument of God's Hatred against Sin, as well as of his Love towards Mankind.

6. But then, as by this we may gather what a hateful and truly detestable thing Sin must needs be, so we cannot but return upon our selves, with Thoughts of the greatest Humility and Abasement, nay, even of Horror and Contempt, when we consider how naturally prone and disposed we are to commit this great and abominable Evil, by reason of the hereditary Corruption of our Natures, whereby we are far distant from original Righteousness, and have the Seed and Principle of all Vice and Wickedness in us. But much more when we reflect how much of this great Evil we have committed, and still continue to commit every Day, in Thought, Word, and Deed, by the wickedness of our Hearts, and by the miscarriages of our Lives ; acting no less against our own Happiness all the while, than against the Laws of God, and the Order of his Government. Especially, if we further consider the Folly and Ignorance, the wrong Reasoning, false Discourse, and Erroneous Judgment, that must first pass in our own Understandings, before we do or can ever commit it. For *there* it is that the
Error

94 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Error begins. The Head is giddy before the Foot slips, and the light of our Eyes is darken'd before we stumble and fall. All Sin is founded in Ignorance and Mistake, and if the Will errs, 'tis because the Understanding misleads her, being it self first Deceived and Imposed upon by a false Appearance of Truth or Good. The Will cannot but follow the Understanding so as to do what the other, all things consider'd, does at that time think best to be done ; and therefore if the Will makes a wrong choice, 'tis a sure Indication that the warrant for the Execution, was sign'd by a false Judgment in the other. For in short, since Evil as Evil is not a possible Object of Choice, 'tis necessary that he that chuses Sin, should consider it in some respect or other as a Good when he chuses it. But it being impossible, that the greatest Evil should in any Supposition be a Good ; to think that it is so, is to think *amiss*, and there lies the mistake ; the great and fundamental mistake of all those who work Iniquity. For this it is that *Solomon* does so often call the Sinner *Fool*, and he calls himself so when he comes to Repent. And therefore, whether we consider Sin in its self and its own natural deformity, or the principle of weakness and imbecility from whence it comes, (that of the understanding especially, upon which we are most apt to value our
selves)

A Treatise concerning Humility. 95

selves) we have all the reason in the world to think the *cloathing* of Humility to be as proper a habit for us Sinners, as *Mourning* is for the Afflicted.

7. God who is Infinite in Knowledge and Power, has many ways whereby to draw Good out of Evil, and to turn even the Sin of Man to his Praise. But the best use we can make of it, is to be Humble for having committed it. And indeed, I do not know a more humbling Consideration than that is. And for this very Reason, perhaps, God in his Wife and Gracious Providence may permit some Men, whose Pride needs so harsh a Remedy, to fall into some gross and heinous Sin, on purpose to Humble them. But however this be, there is no doubt, but that in the event it may be profitable for Proud and High-minded Men to fall into some great Sin, that they may see their Weakness and Infirmary, and what they are when left to themselves, and so may learn Humility by the Experience they have of their own Frailty. And so says St. *Austin*,
Audeo dicere superbis esse utile *De Civ. Dei. Lib.*
14. Cap. 13.
cadere in aliquod apertum manifestumque peccatum, unde sibi displiceant, qui jam sibi placendo ceciderant. And he instances in St. *Peter*, whose Sin indeed had that happy and due effect upon him, to bring him to a better understanding of himself, and to make
make

96 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

make him more Humble, who before was a little too forward and presuming. In which humble sense of himself as he afterwards lived, so at his Death he gave a signal Testimony of it, by chusing to be Crucified with his Head downwards, fearing to be Honoured, as the same Father expresses it, even by the

*kind of his punishment. Honori-
De Sanctis. Sermo. 29. rari etiam supplicii genere pertimescit.* But whatever be the

event of the thing it self, or whatever the designs of God may be in it, certain it is, that in all the Reason and Justice in the World, this ought to be the effect and consequence of it. It is most just and reasonable, that a Sinner should be Humble for his Sin. He ought to lye down in his shame, and his confusion ought to cover him, as the Prophet speaks, Jer. 3. 25. For Humility is a part of Repentance, and therefore is as much the proper Duty of a Sinner as the other is ; it being impossible that a Proud Man should be a penitent Sinner.

8. But though all Sin be a just and most reasonable ground for Humility, sufficient to make him that commits it to sink down into a low esteem of himself, yet there are some Sins of a more Humbling Consideration than others, as proceeding from a greater degree either of Weakness, or of Wickedness, in those that are guilty of them. What those are is
not

A Treatise concerning Humility. 97

not always so much to be measured by the kinds of the Sins themselves, as by the Circumstances wherein, and the temper and disposition of Mind wherewith we commit them. There being hardly any Sin in it self so small as to the matter of it, which may not be so acted as to the manner, as to become exceeding Sinful, and consequently to afford a more than ordinary ground for our Humiliation. Out of a great many such, which every Man's own Thoughts may easily suggest to him, I shall just point out two or three, leaving the Reader to add what others he thinks fit, as also to enlarge upon these.

9. The first of these is frequent Relapsing into Sin after Repentance, and into those very Sins which we have solemnly Repented of, and perhaps, as solemnly Vow'd and Promised against. This shews such a deep and settled radication of Vice in us, such a strong Bias and Inclination to Sin, such a Servitude and Inslavement to our Lusts and Passions, such a general Weakness and Feebleness of Human Nature, as is enough to shame us (if any thing will) into that humble sense of our selves, which more direct and abstract Reasonings may not perhaps be able to work in us. Especially if we consider the evil Effect of such Revoltings, as well as the badness of the Principle they come from. That they harden the Heart, deaden the sense of Piety,

H

stupidify

98 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

stupifie the Conscience, inflave the Will, and weaken all the Springs of Human Nature, till at last the Man comes under an impotence of keeping those good Resolutions which he has so often falsified and broken, and has need of an extraordinary Grace to Convert him, having abused all that is ordinary and common in Religion, by joining it with Vicious and Irreligious Practices.

10. The next that I shall mention among these more than ordinary humbling Sins, is that of *Temporizing* or Time-serving. By Temporizing I mean, when a Man conforms his Principles or Practices to the Times, and dances to the Tune of the Age wherein he Lives, so as to be ready to take up new Principles, or to depart from those which he has always profess'd, whenever a new turn of the Times or emerging reason of Policy shall make it for his Advantage so to do. A Man that steers his Course by the Compass of his worldly Interest, and tacks about to any Point, as that variable Wind happens to sit. This I think is one of the worst Characters that can be given of any Man, and such as argues the basest and most ungenerous Temper and Constitution of Soul. And perhaps it would not be easy for a Man to give a more effectual and convincing Demonstration of his being an Atheist or Infidel at Heart, than by doing thus. The Sins of Sensuality and Debauchery may

A Treatise concerning Humility. 99

may be committed upon the surprize of a violent Temptation, and in the transport of Lust, even by Men who in the general do believe the Truths of Religion, though at that particular time they do not actually attend to them, and so their Passions are too strong for their Principles. But to see Men deliberately and considerately, as if they weighed both Worlds, and with all the coldness and wariness of a Politician, to change their ground backward and forward as occasion requires, shift and double, and descend to the meanest and unworthiest compliances to serve their present Interest; this is not only a Scandal to Religion, but a Repröbation even to Humanity it self; and as 'tis to be feared, such a *Phenomenon* as can be solv'd only by *secret Infidelity*. For this there is great Reason to be Humble, and 'tis well if this Proud and Vain Age, among other Reasons of Humility, does not need this among the rest.

II. But after all, I do not know a more humbling Sin than *Pride* it self is, and from whence we may take a more proper matter and occasion for the Practice and Exercise of Humility. For besides that, 'tis as great and as odious a Sin as any, as shall be seen in its place, so it has this peculiar in it, that it is directly opposite to Humility, and to the whole reason of it, which other Sins are not. If we are Humble for our other Sins, 'tis only

100 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

upon a general Consideration, as they are Sins. But besides that Pride is *that* too as much as any, we have this further reason to be Humble for it, because 'tis a Sin so uncreaturally, so contrary to the state of our Nature, and that proceeds from a strange Ignorance and Forgetfulness of our selves, and withal, is so contrary to that Humility which, both as Men and as Christians, it becomes us to put on as our proper *Cloathing*. The more Proud then we are, the more Humble we have reason to be for that very Pride ; and the higher we rise in the vain esteem and valuation of our selves, the lower we should fall. And if God so Humbled himself as to become Incarnate for the Pride of *Man*, much more should we Humble our selves for our *own* Pride.

S E C T. III.

The Third Argument for Humility, taken from the Consideration of Man as a Creature under certain natural Infirmities and Imperfections.

- I. **I** Call them natural Infirmities, to distinguish them from those Imperfections which he has as a Creature at large, and in common with all other Creatures, as also from those Faults and Moral Defects which he labours under as a Sinner, as being greater than
the

the former, and less than the latter. The Imperfections therefore which I mean, are not such as he has in common with other Creatures, but such as he has as he is a Creature of a certain particular kind and order, or which belong to his *nature* as he is a Man. And therefore I call them *natural* Infirmities. Now indeed these natural Infirmities are not such as we are properly to be blamed for, or to be ashamed of, since they are as to ~~us~~ necessary, and such as are not in our power either to prevent or help. And it is not our fault that God has not given us a more perfect Nature than he has. Which is the reason why it is esteem'd so ill a thing to upbraid Men for such their natural Infirmities. But yet however, though these Infirmities are not such for which we are to reflect upon our selves with either shame or remorse, yet the consideration of them may be very proper to correct our Pride, and to shew what reason we have to be Humble ; as also to keep us in a poor and low esteem of our selves, of whom we cannot, without great Incongruity, have any high sense with all these Infirmities about us.

2. These Infirmities are either of our Bodies or of our Souls. Those of our Souls are really the greatest in themselves, and of the most dangerous consequence, as being a ~~diltemper~~ that affects the best and most noble

102 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

part of us. But those of the Body are the most *sensible* of the two, and that press and admonish us most to take notice of them. And what these are every body sees and feels, and knows by frequent, and sometimes by sad experience ; so that there will be the less occasion to enlarge upon this matter, though it were more agreeable and entertaining than it is. But however, it being a thing that every one is concern'd in, and which is so necessary to be considered by every one, it will be at least convenient to say something of it.

3. To take then a short glancing view of the imperfections of our Nature, we may in the first place reflect, that of that vast Expansion of matter whereof the Universe does consist, what a small portion it is that comes to our share. We may talk of our Farms, Free-holds and Mannors, and the Great ones of the Earth may reckon their Estates by Kingdoms and Dominions, but we have really a proper Tenure in no more than that portion of matter which makes our Bodies. And what is that, and what room does it take up in the Universe ? Nay, what room in the very Earth upon which we tread ? But that it self is but a point, and there are vast spaces above us, beneath us, and round about us, and vast Bodies, not to say whole *Worlds*, that move in those immense Spaces ; and though we may fondly Dream, that these
mighty

A Treatise concerning Humility. 103

mighty Systemes were made only to pay attendance upon *us*, and that they wait upon us in their several *Courses* ; yet what are our Bodies to these Bodies, and what are we our selves in the number of Creatures, and what proportion do we bear to the rest of the Creation ! Indeed so very little, that instead of magnifying our selves, or being great in our own Eyes, we have reason rather to wonder that God should think us considerable enough to be regarded by him, or to be inclosed within the Circle of his Providence. *When I consider thy Heavens, the work of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained : What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the Son of Man that thou visitest him ?* Psal. 8.

4. But if these little Bodies of ours were light, nimble, and active as the Beams of the Sun, if they were strong and able, strong to move themselves, strong to move other Bodies, and strong to indure ; if they were of a firm and lasting consistence, proof against the impressions of other Bodies, and against the corroding teeth of time, Impassible, Incorruptible, and Immortal, that needed no nourishment to repair their decays, no sleep to refresh and recruit their tired and wasted Spirits, no Physick to keep them in Health, no Raiment to keep them Warm, no Care to keep them Tenantable ; if they were always in Youth, Health and Vigour, suitable Com-

104 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

panions for our Souls, and fit Instruments for them to act and operate with ; in fine, if they were such Bodies as we are promised in the *Resurrection*, and wherewith we hope to *meet the Lord in the Air*, though even then we should have no reason to be Proud or Conceited of this our Excellency by vertue of the following Consideration, since 'tis no more than what we should be beholden for as *Receivers*, yet as we should be much other Creatures than now we are, so we might be allowed to think a little better of our selves.

5. But alas 'tis so far otherwise, that our Bodies are Heavy, Dull, and Sluggish, and as much nail'd down to the Earth by their own weight, as our Souls are by their Passions and Desires. So that while the Birds of the Air make their swift and flying Visits from place to place with ease and dispatch, we creep on slowly and heavily, with toil and labour ; and when we have Travelled never so far, we still find our selves at *home*, upon the Earth which we Inhabit, to which we are Condemn'd as Prisoners to a Dungeon. Our very Dwelling is our confinement, and let us go whether we will, we still carry our Chains and Fetters along with us, the *Burthen of the Flesh* ; so that they who have most Liberty, have but a larger Prison. Besides, our Bodies are weak and feeble, as well as heavy and cumbersome ; and the force and power
which

A Treatise concerning Humility. 105

which we have to move other Bodies, is as defective as that which we have to move our own. So that if we have any thing more than ordinary to do, we are fain either to have recourse to the Mechanics, to make use of Artificial Instruments, Engines and Machines, for the production of such Effects, which to attempt by our own immediate force would be in vain, or as a Judicious Person Notes, to serve our selves of those great Motions which we find already in Nature; such as that of the Air, Water, or Fire, by which we supply our Weakness, and do a great many things which we could never do by our selves. Nor is their force greater *against* the Motions of other Bodies, than that which they have to *move* them, being so frail and brittle as not to be able to endure even the impressions of the very Air. For setting aside Wounds and Strokes of harder Bodies, as well as Blasts, Unwholesome Breaths, and Pestilential Vapours, even the ordinary impressions of that Air which we Breathe, and whereby we Live, by those continual Batteries which they make upon our Houses of Clay, are disposing them insensibly to ruin, and would at length demolish the Fabrick. But there is no need of External Causes for this, our Bodies carry in themselves the principles of Mortality, and run naturally to Decay, to Sickness, to Old Age,

Essais de Morale.
Vol. I. p 10.

106 *A Treatise concerning Humility:*

Age, and to Death, which is followed with Corruption, and the dishonours of the Grave. In the mean time they must be preserved with Care, repaired by Nourishment, refreshed by Sleep, and Art must often step in to correct the Disorders, and relieve the defects of Nature. For the very fineness of our Machine, and the innumerable multitude of its Springs and Wheels, makes it liable to a great many discomposures, there being not a part but what may have its proper disorder. By reason of all which Disadvantages, the Corruptible Body presses down the Soul, and the Earthly Tabernacle weigheth down the Mind that muses upon many things. So that in short, the Body is *with* her an unfit Companion, and *without* her a Carcase.

6. Now as to the Infirmities of the Soul, these we may sufficiently learn by a little self-reflection, and therefore I shall only touch upon the defects of the best and principal of its Faculties, that of the *Understanding*. This may be considered either in the way of Sense, or in the way of Intellectual Knowledge. And here I would not have it thought strange, that I chuse to refer Sense to this Head rather than to the last. For though the Organs of Sense are Corporeal, yet 'tis as certain as that matter does not think, that Sense it self belongs to the Soul, being nothing else but that way of understanding, which the Soul has by certain

A Treatise concerning Humility. 107

tain outward Impressions made upon certain parts of the Body, in opposition to another way of perceiving things which it has by it self, without any such impressions. The ground of this Distinction, I find in these remarkable words of St. *Austin*, *Cum enim duo sint genera rerum quæ sciuntur, unum earum quæ per sensus corporis percipit Animus, alterum earum quæ per seipsum, &c.* For whereas, says he, there are two sorts of things that are known, one of those which the Mind perceives by the senses of the Body, another of those which it perceives by it self. Wherein he plainly supposes that the Soul has these two ways of knowing, by distinguishing by *them* the kinds of intelligible Objects. Whether St. *Austin* took this Distinction from *Plato* or no, I know not, but there also I find it in very plain terms; the former part of it being expressed thus; *ὡς ἂν ὁ ψυχὴ τῷ σώματι χρῆται ὡς τὸ σῶμα αὐτῇ. When the Soul makes use of the Body to consider any thing; the latter thus, ὡς ἂν ἡ ψυχὴ κατὰ αὐτὴν αὐτὴν σκεψάται. But when the Soul it self considers by it self.* So here we have considering by the Body, and considering by it self, which is the same with the two ways of perceiving things which St. *Austin* speaks of; whereof the former is what we call *Sensible*, and the latter what we call *Intellectual Knowledge*.

De Trin. lib. 15. Chap. 12.

Plato's Phædo. Pag. 60. Martinius Ficinus his Edit.

7. The obvious Exception against our Senses, is the dullness and slowness of them, in which respect we are commonly said to be inferiour to the Brutes. However, if they were slow and *sure*, as we say, this would afford no great reason of complaint, but that which indeed does so, is, that they are Imposing and Fallacious as well as Slow ; so that we cannot always rely upon their Testimony, without being Betrayed into Error. The Fallaciousness of the Senses, that is of that way of perceiving which the Soul has by the Body, was the complaint of the Old Philosophy. *Plato* himself takes notice of it, and very elegantly represents how the Soul is deceived and abused by the Body in her Philosophical Perceptions, and how necessary it is that she should withdraw her self from it, and consider things by her self, if she would find the Truth, as the Learned Reader may see at large in the forementioned Dialogue. From which I shall here set down Two or Three Expressions to that purpose. He tells us, that when the Soul does undertake to speculate any thing by the Body, or with the Body, *σκοπεῖν τι μετὰ τοῦ σώματος*, she is deceived by it. Again he tells us, that when the Soul uses the Body in Speculation, she errs, and is troubled and staggers (*ἰνυσιᾶ*) as if she were Drunk. He tells us again, that Philosophy shews that Speculation by the Eyes, Ears, and the

A Treatise concerning Humility. 109

the other Senses, is full of Deceit, and that it perswades the Soul to depart from them, unless when there is a necessity to use them ; and to gather her self up into her self, and to believe none but her self, as far as she her self understands by her self, &c. And accordingly he tells us, that they that Philosophize rightly, are the only Persons that always study to loosen the Soul from the Body. And that the solution and separation of the Soul from the Body (which he had before made the definition of Death) is the very thing which is the Meditation of Philosophers. *τὸ μάλιστα αὐτὸ εἶναι τῶν φιλοσόφων, λύσις. ἢ χειρισμὸς ψυχῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος.* Signifying, as appears plainly by the drift of his Discourse, and many other passages of like importance in the same Dialogue, that the great Business, Study, and Exercise of a Philosopher, is to withdraw his Soul from his Body, not in a Natural, but in a Mystical Sense ; that is, to make as much use of his Mind, and as little of his Body, as may be in the Contemplation of Truth ; to turn himself from Sensible and Corporeal things, to Incorporeal Reasons and Ideas, and so to Dye as it were to Sense, that he may Live to pure Reason and Intellect. Which also I take to be the true intention of his making Philosophy to be the *Meditation of Death.*

8. But

110 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

8. But that which was the Complaint of the Old Philosophy, has been fully and distinctly proved in the New, wherein the Errors of the Senses have been inquired into and laid open, with an exactness unknown to former Ages, and particularly with so great variety of both Reason and Experiment by the Author of the Research of Truth, that there needs no more to be said here concerning this matter, than only that from the Observations made about the Errors of our Senses, it sufficiently appears, that they were not intended to instruct us in the exactnesses of Truth, but to serve the conveniencies of Life. That they were given us chiefly, if not only, for the use of the Body, not to Philosophize with, but to Live with, not to discover what other Bodies are absolutely in themselves and their own Nature, but what they are in relation to *ours*, that so the *Machine* may be preserved from Destructive Impressions. And to this purpose they serve excellently well, indeed far better than the purest and abstractest reasoning would be able to do. But if we expect any thing further from them, we forget their Design, and pervert their Use. And if we would know with exactness the absolute natures of things, the Soul must not take her intelligence from the Body, but consider things by her self, as the Philosopher speaks; which brings us to that
other

A Treatise concerning Humility. III

other sort of Knowledge which we call *Intellectual*.

9. This I own to be by much the more perfect Knowledge, or way of knowing, of the two. For here instead of confuse Sensations, we have a clear intellectual sight, and Ideal view of things. Here we have some *terra firma* to fix and stay our footing on, and light to direct the steps which we make upon it. We have here clear and self-evident Principles, and from these Principles we can deduce most certain and infallible Conclusions, and many such Conclusions have been drawn by Thoughtful and Contemplative Men, whereby a great deal of Truth has been discovered, and great Improvements made in all Arts and Sciences. And to give the present Age its due, Knowledge of all sorts is now advanced to a very extraordinary degree of Perfection. And the less use Men make of their Senses, and the more they make of their Reason and Understanding, the more they will improve in Knowledge.

10. But then 'tis here to be considered, that this Knowledge lies within the compass of a very few Heads. For in the first place, the far greater part of Mankind are stupidly ignorant, think grossly, hardly of any thing further than either their Necessities or Pleasures, and have scarce one clear and distinct thought about any thing in their whole Lives.

Then

112 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Then as for those whom either Nature or Education has a little more *awaken'd*, they oftentimes indeed generally misapply their studies, and mistake false and imaginary for true and real Learning and Knowledge ; placing what they call Learning, in the Knowledge of Words, or of matters of Fact, or of Opinions, or even in the *dead* Knowledge of those very Books themselves wherein these are contain'd, instead of placing it in *things*, in the clear intellectual sight of those necessary and immutable Truths which are the Objects of Science, wherein most certainly it ought to be placed. So that what between the ignorant and those that are falsely Learn'd, true Knowledge will be brought within a very little compass.

II. But then as to those *few* who have this Knowledge, how very little is it that they have of it ! And should they think otherwise, they would yet have less. For if our Knowledge seem a great deal, 'tis our Ignorance that makes it seem so. We know but little, and that makes us apt to fancy that there is but little to be known ; and imagining that there is but little to be known, what we do know seems to be a great deal with relation to that little. And so indeed perhaps it may ; but if we knew more we should think we knew less, because then we should see such a boundless compass in the Field of Truth, and
that

A Treatise concerning Humility. 111

that there was so much to be known, that what we actually knew would appear an inconsiderable Attainment. For in short, Truth is Infinite, and all the Knowledge we have or can have, bears no proportion to it. And as our Knowledge bears no proportion to *Truth*, so neither does it to our *own Ignorance*; what we know after all our study, and with the best advantages of Education, not being comparable to what we are ignorant of. So that upon the whole, though one Man may be said to be Learned and Wise, or to know a great deal in comparison of another who knows a great deal less, yet the Wisest knows but little, in comparison either of what may be known, or of what he does not and cannot know. So that either way we know but little.

12. Little indeed of every thing. We know but little of God, little of Metaphysical, Mathematical or Moral Truths; little of Nature, when even every Herb, or blade of Grass, puzzles our Inquiries, and triumphs over our Philosophy, and least of all, of our *selves*. We know but little of our Bodies, and infinitely less of our Souls, nor how our Souls and Bodies are United, so as to constitute that third Being which we call our selves. And as we know not the manner of the Soul's Union with the Body, so neither, how it exists in a State of separation from it. In other
I parts

114 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

parts of Philosophy we have *here* some smattering, but the Philosophy of a separate state is wholly to be learnt in another world, and 'tis Death only that can instruct us what that Life is. We know not what we are, and we know not what we shall be. For not only the state of separation, but our whole future state is perfectly in the Dark to us. *It does not yet appear*, as St. John says, *what we shall be*. God for wise Reasons has not thought fit to reveal it to us ; and the natural force of our own Reasonings is not able to rise up to such a Discovery. It is therefore a *Seal'd Book*, and must continue so till God pleases to open the Seals of it. In the mean time, it may be said of every Man what *Solomon* says of an untimely Birth, that he *cometh in with Vanity, and departs in Darknes*, *Eccles. 6. 4.*

13. But then besides the littleness of our Knowledge, when 'tis further considered how much that little costs us, with what expence of Time and Labour we Court this Coy Mistress, and with what Toil and Study we at length obtain to be a little Wise ; how late we come to it, how precariously and uncertainly we possess it ; all our fine Notions and Theories being at the Mercy of a Disease, and if that spare us, yet after all, for how short a time we have the use of it, the Night of Death overtaking us by that time our cloudy Day begins to shine out, and that then

A Treatise concerning Humility. 115

then with all our Wisdom we must descend to the levelling Grave, where the most learned Dust shall not be distinguished from common Earth. In the mean time that all Souls are naturally equal, and that those little Advantages which we may have above others, as to Parts or Understanding, are purely Accidental, as owing to a better temper of the Blood and Spirits, or a more happy contexture of the Brain, which is only an accidental Difference, like that of a well Man from a Sick Man; and that in the other World, the greatest Fool may be as Wise as the Wisest, and perhaps *more Happy*; I say, when these and such like things (for 'tis infinite to say all that upon this occasion might be said) are duly weighed and considered, it will appear to a great degree of Evidence, that we are so far from having any Cause to be proud of our Knowledge, whether Sensible or Intellectual, that if we had nothing else to Humble us, we should not want sufficient Reason to be Humble. So great are the Defects and Infirmities of it.

14. All which things when we consider, we shall find no reason to complain that the Character, which the *Psalmist* gives of Human Nature, is at all degrading, when he says, *surely every Man is Vanity*, *Psal.* 39. He lays it down, as a Proposition of a universal and most certain Truth. And there can be no

116 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

dispute but that so it is. Every Man without distinction or privilege of Quality, is concluded under this Humbling Sentence, and that too, even in the best point of view wherein you can place him. For so also the Prophet further remarks, *verily every Man at his best State is altogether vanity.* In his greatest Strength, in his fullest Wisdom, in his most flourishing and prosperous Condition, he is no better than Vanity, a Shadow rather than a Substance. Vanity in his Body, and Vanity in his Soul, *altogether Vanity.* But then if this be our Character, if Man be a Creature so compassed about with *Infirmities*, he need not add this to all the rest, to be *Proud* and *Vain* with them.

S E C T. IV.

The Last Argument for Humility, taken from the Consideration of Man, as being a receiver of all the Good which he has from God.

1. **W**^E have already surveyed Man on several sides, and as it were, taken measure of him, to see how the Garment of Humility will become him, and how well it will fit upon him. And we find that thus far it fits him very well, as if it were made on purpose for his Wear. We have considered him as a Creature, as a Sinner, and as

A Treatise concerning Humility. 117

a Creature under several Natural Infirmities, both as to Body and Mind ; in all which respects there appears to be no manner of reason or foundation for Pride or High-mindedness, and a great deal why he should be Humble and Lowly in Heart. But now suppose that he had none of these Defects, (that of *Creature* only excepted) suppose he were not only an innocent, but a perfect Creature, as perfect as *Adam* was, or as the Second *Adam* was as to his Human Nature ; or as the Angels of *Light* are ; or as he himself shall hereafter be, in that state where Human Nature is at the Height both of Grace and Glory ; though he had all the Perfections and Endowments sum'd up in him which are dispers'd at large among the Creatures ; or, to say no more, were all that which in his Pride and Vanity he may sometimes fancy himself to be ; yet still this last Argument would take hold of him, and he would still be obliged to be Humble, and find it very reasonable to be so, as not being the Original Spring and Fountain of his own Perfections, but a *Receiver* and a *Debtor*, being beholden to the Goodness and Favour of God for them.

2. In this Argument there is an Antecedent, and a Consequence. The Antecedent is, that we are not to our selves the principle of that Good which we have the actual possession of, but have received it from elsewhere, name-

118 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

ly from God. The Consequence is, that therefore considering this our dependency, we ought not to be Proud, but Humble. These are the two parts of the Argument, and we have St. Paul's Authority for both of them. For the First in these plain words, *Who maketh thee to differ from another ? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive ?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. For the Second in what follows, *Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it ?* Which Two Questions (and indeed very mortifying Questions they are) amount to these two positive Affirmations ; First, that we have nothing but what we have received. And that therefore Secondly, let our Perfections or Endowments be what they will, we ought not to be puffed up for them, or to glory in them, as being our own, no otherwise than as to the use and possession of them. In which respect they are as to us only a Charge and a Debt, and therefore no fit matter for Pride, unless a Man has reason to be Proud of this, that he is in *Debt*.

3. But that is so far otherwise, that a Man by his very boasting or glorying, signifies that he is *no* Receiver, nor beholden for what he has. For a Receiver has no right to boast ; and therefore if you boast, you do as good as signify that you are *no* Receiver. And therefore says the Apostle, *why dost thou glory*

as

A Treatise concerning Humility. 119

as if thou hadst not received it? Which by the way mightily aggravates the Sin of Pride, and shews it to be the greatest Injustice and Ingratitude in the World, as being a constructive, disowning, and vertual denial of our having received what we have from God, *who giveth liberally*, as St. James says, *and upbraideth not*, which must needs be the very height of Impudence and Disingenuity. For Pride being an excessive Opinion of our selves, we have no pretence to glory in any thing but what is our own; what is not so being nothing as to us, and so making no part of our Grandeur. And therefore if we do glory in any thing, we must be understood so far to renounce all dependency upon God, and to proclaim our selves the Authors and Original Principle of that Good which we boast of, or magnifie our selves for. And the Apostles Expostulation intimates no less *Why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it, or as one that has not received?* *It is not we.* As much as to say, that one that is no Receiver, but owes all that he has to himself, can do no more than that, to glory in what he has; and therefore as thou art a Receiver and a Debtor, canst not with any face pretend to any such thing, so if thou dost, thou thereby disownest thy Benefactor, and settest up for thy self.

4. 'Tis to be observed that the Apostle in
I 4
this

110 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

this Argument, does not deny but that we may really *differ* from others by some peculiar and distinguishing Excellencies and Endowments, that we may be indeed Wiser, or Better, or Greater; and that 'tis not only a fond partiality to our selves that makes us think so. But then he inquires concerning the cause of this difference, and would have us consider whether it be from our selves or no. *Who maketh thee to differ* from another, or who distinguishes thee? Implying, that we our selves are not the Authors of this Distinction, and consequently, that no Praise redounds to us from it. Then again, he does not absolutely say that we have *nothing*, for we have a great deal, an excellent Nature as Men, besides many personal Excellencies and Endowments both of Body and Mind which we may also have, but that we have nothing but what we have *received* and are beholden for. What hast thou says he that thou didst not receive? And then from this Question, or rather from the supposed Answer to it, *viz.* that we have indeed nothing but what we have received; he proceeds to deduce another Question by way of Inference; why then will we be so unreasonably absurd as to be Proud of what we have, when we have nothing to be Proud of? *Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?* Why indeed, since we are
not

A Treatise concerning Humility. 121

not to our selves the *Authors* of our own Good, and to be a *Receiver*, can found no Right or Title to Glory.

5. On the contrary, all the Glory belongs to the *Giver*, and if those Excellencies and Perfections, whereof he is the Author or Principle, be in himself, then that is his own Essential Glory which is inseparably Inherent in him, and our acknowledging this, is our Glorifying him, or the Glory which we Ascribe to him. But if those Perfections, whereof he is the Author, be in us, then our acknowledging that we have them from him, is properly the Glory which we pay to him. Which Glory we might justly take to our selves without looking any higher or further, if we were the Root and Principle of those Perfections which we have. But since we are not, as having nothing but what we have receiv'd, 'tis plain that we have nothing to do with it. 'Tis a Sacred and Devoted thing, and we cannot meddle with it without a *Sacrilegious* Usurpation. The Gifts and Goods indeed are ours as to the use and possession of them, but to God alone belongs all the Glory of them; and he himself tells us, that he will not part with it; so that he that Glories must Glory in the Lord, and no otherwise.

6. This one Argument confounds all the Pride of Men and Angels, shews it to be all nonsense,

124 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

fer ; and as long as it is so, so long we have reason to be Humble ; and if we are not so, the Question will still return upon us ; if thou beest a Receiver, *why dost thou Glory?* The reason of the consequence is, because as I said before, we have no right to glory in any thing but what is our *own* ; and if we do, we are like Beggars who are proud of an Alms, or who vainly boast of, or admire themselves in the Cloaths that are given them, which is to be proud of anothers Bounty ; than which nothing can be more ridiculous. For a Receiver as such is nothing, and in this properly lies the *Nothingness* of the Creature ; and therefore to be proud of what we have received, is in effect to be proud of Nothing ; and certainly he that is so, has more reason to be Humble than to be Proud.

9. For here those words of the same Apostle take place, *If a Man think himself to be something, when he is nothing*, Gal. 6. 3. Or as the Greek more emphatically speaks, being *Nothing*, he *deceiveth himself*. Εἰ δὲ τίς ἑαυτὸν τι εἶναι νομίσῃ ὅτι οὐδέν ἐστιν. Being nothing that is but by the Grace, Favour, and Bounty of God. The like phrase I find in the close of *Plato's* Apology for *Socrates*, where he introduces that wise and excellent Person, using the like form of words to his *Athenian* Judges with regard to his Children, *ἐγὼ δὲ οὐδὲν ἢ τίνα τι εἶναι νομίσω*

A Treatise concerning Humility. 125

was if they think themselves something, being nothing. Here we have the Philosopher speaking the very Language of the Apostle, but whether the same sense, is not so certain. 'Tis like that by being Nothing, *Socrates* meant no more than *when* they are Nothing. But I see not, since the Phrase will bear it, why the Apostle may not be interpreted higher. And 'tis plain that being Nothing does signifie more, or at least does more Emphatically signifie the same than *when* he is Nothing. The latter being Conditional and restrain'd to a certain Case, whereas the other (*being nothing*) is Absolute and Unlimited. But whether the Apostle supposing and taking for granted that we are nothing, means Absolutely, that for us to think our selves something is to deceive our selves, which indeed seems the most preferable sense, or whether he speaks only conditionally, that we deceive our selves in thinking our selves to be something if or when we are nothing, we need not much dispute, so long as the condition is fulfilled in us, and the Case supposed is truly our Case. For indeed, whatever we are *in* our selves, 'tis plain that we are nothing of our selves, as having received all from God. And therefore if we think our selves to be something, we come under the Apostles Censure of deceiving our own selves. So then, which is the result of all, we have
nothing

126 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

nothing in us to be proud of, but a great deal, God knows, to be Humble for. And how great reason have we to be so, when not only our Sins and Infirmities, but even our very Excellencies and Perfections, as being *Received*, are a just matter for Humility.

10. We may say then now as the Apostle does in another Case, *where then is boasting?* To which we may also answer as he does, *it is excluded.* By *what Law*! why by the very Law of our Being, by the condition of our Nature, as we are Creatures of God, and as we are our own Creatures, that is Sinners; and as we are infirm and imperfect Beings, and as having received all the Good which we have from God; so that we have nothing left to be Proud of, unless we will be Proud of that which is not our own, or of our Sins. To be proud of that which is not our own, is *without* reason; and to be Proud of our Sins, is *against* all Reason and Religion too. Our Sins indeed are our own, and the only thing which purely and truly is so; but then they are not a fit matter to glory in, being the Shame and Reproach of our Nature. And as for the Goods and Perfections which we have, they indeed are not unfit for Glorifying as to the matter of them, but then they are not our own, and so all pretence to Glorifying is again cut off that way. So that every way all Pride and Boasting is *Excluded*.

11. But

A Treatise concerning Humility. 127

11. But then if we are not to be Proud of other things, because by the Grace of God we are what we are, as the Apostle says, much less ought we to be Proud of *Grace* it self. Whether by Grace we understand the free Love, Kindness, and Favour of God, or the inward operation of his Spirit disposing us to what is good, and assisting us in the practice of our Duty. As for Grace in the first sense, I confess indeed that for a Creature, and a Sinner, to be the Object of God's Love and Favour, is a great thing, astonishingly great, infinitely greater than to be the darling Favourite of the Mightiest Prince upon Earth. *Hail thou that art highly favoured, O Man greatly beloved, and the Disciple whom Jesus loved,* are strange Characters for God to give, or for a Creature to receive. And there needs a mighty Grace in the other sense, to bear such a Grace as this. For indeed it is a great Temptation. And accordingly we find, that those uncommon Favours and Graces vouchsafed to St. Paul in his Rapture, had so far indanger'd his Humility, that he needed a Thorn in the Flesh to keep down the tumour of the Spirit, lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of Revelations. But though the Grace and Favour of God, if any thing be highly to be prized, as the *Psalmist* teaches us when he says, *thy Loving kind-*

128 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

kindness is better than Life it self, Psal. 63.
 Yet there is no reason why we should be exalted upon it, though even an Angel should acquaint us with it as he did the Blessed Virgin, partly because it is a thing without us, and partly because it is so utterly undeserved by us. And indeed we have much more reason to be Humble, to think how little we deserve it, than Proud because we have it. Then as for Grace, as it signifies the assistance of God's Spirit, besides that to be Proud of this is the greatest abuse of it; one of the chiefest works and ends of God's Grace being to subdue our Pride, and to keep us Humble; 'tis further to be considered, that as our *having* it is from God's free and undeserved Favour and Bounty, so that we need it is from our own Weakness and Infirmary; and that as to be Proud of God's other Gifts, is like a Beggars being Proud of his *Cloaths*; so to be Proud of this, is as if a Beggar should be Proud of his *Crutches*. St. *Austin* cau-

De Sancti. Virginitate. Cap. 43.

tions against this sort of Pride

in these words, *Deinde jam*

sciens homo gratiâ Dei se esse quod est, non incidat in alium superbia laqueum, at de ipsâ Dei gratiâ se extollendo spernat ceteros.

12. And as we have no reason to be Proud of the Grace of God, so neither of those Vertues which we have, nor of those good
Actions

A Treatise concerning Humility. 129

Actions which we do *by* that Grace. This is what we commonly call by the name of *Spiritual Pride*, and which is of all others the worst, as having besides its common unreasonableness, this peculiar ill Quality in it, that it changes the very Supposition upon which it proceeds, by destroying that goodness which is the subject of it, which no other Pride does. If I am Proud of my Learning, my Pride does not formally make me less Learned, though it supposes me not to be so Wise as I should be, since if I were I should not be Proud. And so again, if I am Proud of my Wealth, though I am a Fool to be Proud of that which is less valuable than my self, yet my Pride does not make me the less wealthy. The Effects indeed of my Pride may, but my Pride it self does not. For I am not the less Wealthy, barely for being Proud of my Wealth, though I may be for those extravagancies in Living which are the effects of that Pride. And so if I am Proud of my Beauty, my Pride does not make me really the less Beautiful, though perhaps it may give such a disagreeable Air to my Behaviour as to make it appear to less Advantage. But still my Beauty in it self is the same. And so again, if I am Proud of my Birth, I am not for that the less nobly Born, nor is that Pride a blot upon my *Escutcheon*, though it be to my *Mind*. But now if I

130 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

am Proud of my Goodness or Vertue, my Goodness suffers by my Pride, and is even lost in my Vanity. For let me have never so many Vertues, 'tis all nothing, nay, I am still a bad Man if I am Proud of them.

In Regulâ ad Servos Dei.

And what does it profit, as St. *Austin* observes, for a Man to Impoverish himself by giving to the Poor, if he is more Proud of his contempt of Riches, than he was of the possession of them. *Quid prodest dispergere dando pauperibus, & pauperem fieri, cum anima misera superbior efficitur, divitias contemnendo, quam fuerat possidendo.* And accordingly he says again in the same place, that Pride lies in wait to destroy our good works, *superbia bonis operibus insidiatur ut pereant.*

13. And thus having shewn the Reasonableness of Humility by these Four Considerations, it may now perhaps be expected, that I should also represent the unreasonableness of Pride. But besides what has been here Incidentally and Occasionally let fall concerning that matter, 'tis to be considered, that the unreasonableness of Pride is sufficiently seen in the reasonableness of Humility, since whatever is a Reason *for* the one, is at the same time an Argument *against* the other, as being the contrary Vice. I shall therefore content my self with having shewn the reasonableness of Humility, to which all that

A Treatise concerning Humility. 131

remains as further necessary, is seriously to consider what a great Obligation there lies upon us all, to apply our selves to the practice and exercise of a Vertue which appears to be every way so highly reasonable; as also actually and effectually to set about the practice of it. And may God Almighty dispose and assist us by his Grace for the doing of both.

R 2

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Excellency of Humility.

S E C T. I.

The Excellency of Humility argued from the Reasonableness of it.

1. **B**Y the Excellency of a thing, we understand something more than the bare Goodness of it, though that be also included. 'Tis the Goodness of it in a very great degree, whereby it exceeds the common proportion of things that are said to be Good. 'Tis the excess of a thing is Goodness, not that whereby it exceeds any certain particular, (for so a great many things may exceed, and yet not be what we call *excellent*) but that whereby it exceeds the common Measure or Standard. Now such things there are in common Morality, which has its cardinal Vertues. Such there were in *Moses's* Law which had the first and great Commandment, besides those more weighty things of the Law which our Saviour speaks of. And such there are also in Christianity, wherein though all be great and good, yet
there

A Treatise concerning Humility. 133

there are things that are more excellent; and though the whole constellation of its Vertues be Bright and Shining, yet one Star differs from another Star in Glory. And accordingly says *St. Paul, the greatest of these is Charity,* 1 Cor. 13. 13.

2. Now that Humility is a very excellent Vertue in this sense, appears first from what has hitherto been Discours'd concerning the great reasonableness of it. For that's the first thing that makes any Vertue to be excellent, and by that we measure its excellence. For as in matters of Speculation, we call that a good Conclusion which depends upon strong and demonstrative Principles or Premises, and which by the strength or light of them appears most fit to be assented to by us; so in matters of Practice or things to be done, (which are as so many practical Conclusions) those things we may justly esteem, and properly call excellent, for the doing of which there is a great deal of Reason. For the more of that there is in the Premises, the stronger is the Conclusion, or which is the same in effect, the better is the *Vertue*.

3. 'Tis by the reason for which it is to be done, that one Vertue exceeds or outshines another. For it must be either the Reason of the thing, or the Authority of the Law-giver. As for the Authority of the Law-giver,

134 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

giver, that's equal on all sides ; the least Vertue, or the least of God's Commands having as much of that as the greatest. That therefore which is not different can make no difference. And therefore if there be any, it must be from the reason of the thing it self. Which by the way proves *Morality*, or that Natural Intrinsic Goodness of some Actions which is Antecedent to, and Independent on the Law of God. For instance, God says that he will have Mercy and not Sacrifice ; which implies, that Mercy is the better of the two ; or as St. Paul speaks of Charity, the *more excellent way*. But why the better ? They were both Commanded, and by the same Authority, and in that respect one was as good as the other. That therefore which was prefer'd must be prefer'd upon the account of its Natural and Intrinsic Goodness. And therefore there are some Actions that are good in themselves, or that are Morally good, or else there was no reason why Mercy should be prefer'd before Sacrifice. Nor can *they* give any account of this matter, who resolve the goodness of Actions into the Will of God, and so make it merely positive. For however in this way they might hope to render a Reason of their simple Goodness, yet the comparative Goodness or Betterness whereby one Action excels another, when they are
are

A Treatise concerning Humility. 135

are both of Divine Institution, can never be accounted for upon that Principle. That must be resolved into the intrinsic reason of the thing. 'Twas by this that the Moral Law excell'd the Ceremonial; and 'tis by this that one part of the Moral Law, or one Vertue, is more excellent than another.

4. Upon this account it 'twas, that the devout *Psalmist* spends so much Meditation upon the Excellency, and dwells so long in the Praise and Commendation of the Law of God. The whole 119th *Psalm* is employed upon that Subject. And had the whole Secret and Myſtery of the matter been no more than this, that such certain things had been commanded and required by God, without any intrinsic Goodness in the things themselves, or previous reason why they should be commanded by a Wise Law-giver, I say had this been all, I do not see what occasion the *Psalmist* had to be so free and copious in extolling this Law, much less to call the precepts of it Righteous Judgments, or to pray that God would open his Eyes that he might behold wondrous things out of his Law; or to say that his Statutes were the Subject of his Meditation, (for what occasion is there to Meditate in things whose only reason is God's Will and Pleasure) or to say that his Delight was in God's Law, that it was better to him than thousands of

136 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Gold and Silver, and sweeter than Honey to his Mouth. Or to say that God's Commandment was exceeding broad, and that he had more understanding than his Teachers, because he had made that his Study. Or to say that God's Testimonies were wonderful, and that therefore he kept them, that the entrance of his word gives Light and Understanding to the simple, that his Judgments are upright, and that the Testimonies which he had commanded, were Righteous and very Faithful ; that his Word is very pure, that his Law is the Truth, that the righteousness of his Testimonies is everlasting, and that all his Commandments are Truth, &c. 'Twas therefore the subject Matter and intrinsic Reason of the Law of God upon which both its own Excellency, and that high Esteem which the *Psalmist* professes of it was founded. But we have already shewn the Vertue of Humility to be highly Reasonable, and therefore by that it appears to be as highly Excellent.

SECT.

S E C T. II,

*The Excellency of Humility, further argued
from the Quiet and Repose which it gives to
the Mind.*

I. **T**Ranquillity of Mind is both a principal part, and a necessary condition of Happiness, since without it no other part of Happiness can please or relish, or yield any true enjoyment to him that has it. There are two sorts of this tranquility of Mind, very distinct, though perhaps not always so distinctly considered. One is what we call peace of Conscience, by which I think is to be understood no other than that competent measure of persuasion which a Man is in as to the safe estate of his Soul with respect to the favour of God, and the Happiness of another Life. (For as for a Man's Consciousness of his own Sincerity, or that inward approbation which he passes upon it in the court of his Breast, that is rather the Ground and Foundation of peace of Conscience, than the very thing it self, being properly what we call a *good Conscience*). The other is a state of Freedom, Liberty, or Exemption from the Power and Dominion of the Passions, which being as so many Tempests ruffling and discomposing
the

138 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

the Soul that is subject to them, and making it like the troubled Sea by their violent agitations, the mind that is delivered from them may be not improperly said to be in *Tranquility*, or to enjoy an intellectual *Calm*.

2. This latter sort of *Tranquility of Mind*, was that which was so much both the Talk and the Boast of some of the Heathen Philosophers, and concerning which one of them has written a particular Treatise. But the Philosophy of it is one thing, and the Possession of it is another. And though there is no doubt, but that Reason and Philosophy may go very far in composing the Mind into this sort of *Tranquility*, yet after all that Philosophy can do, the best and most effectual Remedy to lay the fury of the Passions, is the same that Remedies the corruption of our Nature from whence it Springs, *viz.* the Grace of God. Upon which the other sort of *Tranquility of Mind* does no less depend; but however, they otherwise differ, yet they both agree in this, that they are both Essential Parts, and Necessary Conditions of Human Happiness. And therefore whatever Naturally tends to the procurement or promotion of them, must needs be a thing of great Excellence, as tending so far to the procuring of our Happiness. Now this Humility does in both the Senses premised. It contributes to *Tranquility of Mind* in the
first

A Treatise concerning Humility. 139

first Sense, as much as any other *single* Vertue does. (For 'tis from a *Conjociation* of Vertues that that must arise). But for the procuring of the latter, it has a singular and peculiar aptness. And accordingly, though I do not exclude the other, yet this is that tranquility of Mind which I here primely intend.

3. Now what a friend Humility is to this, we may gather from those words of our Saviour Christ, the great Doctor and the great Example of Humility, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart, and ye shall find rest unto your Souls.* Mat. 11. 29. Here we may first of all observe, that our Lord proposes himself to us as the great Pattern and Example of our imitation, by calling upon us, and exhorting us to learn of him. *Learn of me.* Then we have here Secondly, the Reason why he exhorts us to do so, *viz.* because of his being so eminently indued with those two great Vertues, Meekness and Humility. *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart.* Which implies again Thirdly, that those very Vertues in particular, were more especially commended to our Study and Practice, because we are exhorted to learn of Christ for the sake of those Vertues. Then in the last place, we have here the encouragement which our Lord promises to all those who shall thus learn

140 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

learn of him, that is, imitate him in these Vertues, *viz.* Repose and Tranquility of Mind. *And ye shall find rest unto your Souls.* This is the resolution of the Text, and these are the several parts contained in it, if it were to be handled thoroughly and fully. But our concern at present lies only in the last, in that rest and repose which Humility brings with it to the Soul that is under the Power and Habit of that excellent Vertue. That Soul shall certainly find rest, if not in the World, yet in it self.

4. 'Tis observable that these words of our Lord are directed to those that labour and are heavy Laden, and who of all Men may be presumed most to desire and to value Rest. *Come unto me,* says he, *all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* But how? Why in a very unusual and surprizing way. 'Tis by adding more weight and burthen to those who are already heavy laden and weary. For so it follows, *take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your Souls.* "Blessed Lord, is this thy way of giving rest, by laying on new weight upon those who are already fatigued, and even oppres'd with their Burthen. But thy Yoke is not like other Yokes, nor thy Burthen like other Burthens. For thy Yoke is easy, and thy Burthen is light. Not that
" Burthen

A Treatise concerning Humility. 141

“ Burthen which thou didst bear thy self
“ for us towards Mount *Calvary*, which was
“ a sad as well as heavy weight, but that
“ which thou art pleased to lay upon *us*,
“ the Burthen of *Humility*. A Burthen that
“ is not only easie and light, but that makes
“ those so that bear it. The World’s Re-
“ freshments are Burthens, but thy Burthens
“ are Refreshments. And Humility is thy
“ Yoke, a Yoke that fits upon our Necks,
“ and presses down our Heads, and so puts
“ us into a lowly and submissive posture,
“ but which does not gall our Shoulders,
“ nor oppresses our Backs. Nay the more it
“ presses, the less we feel its weight, and
“ the more easy it makes us. For the low-
“ er it sinks us, the nearer it brings us to
“ *our own Nothing*, and every thing is then
“ most easie when it is in its natural and
“ proper state. Lord give us of thy Spirit,
“ and then we shall partake of thy Rest.

5. There is no Rest in Pride. It could not rest in Heaven, and how then can it rest upon Earth. It is indeed a restless thing, and withal, the greatest Enemy to all rest and quietness of any Vice in the World. It suffers no such thing as Rest wherever it is, either within or without. Within it torments those that have it, without it is a torment and vexation to others. Other Vices as they promise rest and satisfaction,

142 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

faction, so they give it for a while ; the Sinner being well enough pleased with his Sin while he commits it, and not feeling presently the treacherous wound that is given him in the embraces of it. But now Pride is all over one continued and uninterrupted uneasiness from first to last. And though there may be some imaginary Pleasures wherewith Proud Men entertain themselves, such as the contemplation of their own greatness, or of that place of respect which they think they hold in the Opinions of others, (though this latter would be very much abated, if they did truly know what other Men think of them) yet the uneasiness of their Pride swallows up all the pleasure of it, and one little disrespect or neglect spoils the relish, and even annihilates the very sense of all their other greatness. That of Proud *Haman* was an honest confession of this matter, *yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the King's Gate.* Had *Haman* been an Humble Man this had been no Mortification to him. But so the lofty Cedar falls by that high Wind which offends not the lowly Shrub.

6. A Proud Man having a high opinion and esteem of himself, must think that he deserves the same of others, that they should think of him as he thinks of himself; consequently he must desire that they should do so,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 143

so, and expresse the same by a suitable Address in their Behaviour and Deportment towards him, and so *Vain-glory* is the Natural effect of *Pride*. His desire that they should so think of him, will pass into a Concern whether they do or no, which very Concern it self is a troublesome state of the Mind. But then this Concern will beget a Jealousie lest they should not. And this Jealousie (of it self a tormenting Passion) will beget a watchfulness how Men receive what he says or does, how they censure his words or actions. And it being impossible that other Men should think of him as he thinks of himself, they must (except a few servile Flatterers) fall as short in the Expressions of their respect, which yet will be sunk lower than they really are by the height of his Pride, which by pretending to so much as his due, will make every thing seem little, except Affronts, which will be as much magnified, and for which a great many things will be taken which were never so intended. So that what between real and imaginary disrespects, the poor Self-admirer will endure a perpetual Crucifixion. To relieve which, he is denied the remedy of other Sinners. For they, whatever they endure besides, do yet satisfy their own Natural Inclinations, and that's something however, but these a Proud Man must Sacrifice to the opinion of others,
since

144 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

since 'tis that which he so passionately courts; and so he must please them though he displeases himself in it.

7. But besides all this, a Proud Man is by his Pride put upon one of the unjustest things in the World. For being full of himself he necessarily despises others, and from his great height looks down upon them with Contempt; and yet the same Pride that makes him despise others, must make him desire that others should esteem and regard *him*. Now besides that the esteem of those whom a Man despises can't be of much worth to him, the very unfairness and unreasonableness of the thing is enough to take away even that little, when a Man shall consider how against all Reason and Justice he is possess'd of it. Not because he does not deserve it, (for that a Proud Man will hardly be convinc'd of) but because he does not, and by the very conditions of his Pride is bound never to return it. But then it must be uneasie to him as well as unreasonable to take it, though perhaps not so uneasie as to go without it. And so he submits to one uneasiness to avoid a greater, but never enjoys any true Quiet, or pure Repose.

8. But now Humility is all over nothing else, and he that puts on this Yoke of Christ, will be sure to find *Rest* unto his Soul. So our Saviour positively assures us, and both
Reason

A Treatise concerning Humility. 145

Reason and Experience witness to the truth of it. For the Humble Man thinking meanly of himself, and so not being apprehensive that he deserves that others should think any better of him, does not covet or affect to be had in high esteem, nor to have outward and publick Acknowledgments of that worth for which he finds no Foundation within, and so desires no *Glory*, nor consequently is under any concern whether he has it or no, nor jealous that he has it not, nor envious at those who have it. Nor is he therefore put to the trouble of observing, or minding, or inquiring what People think or say of him. Nor does he create any trouble or disquiet to himself, either by Multiplying or by Magnifying Affronts, by fancying himself to be unhanfomely treated when he is not, or by aggravating such Indignities as he may really meet with, beyond their just size and natural proportion. Besides, that having a low sense of himself, it cannot be either any great surprize or trouble to him to find that others think as he does ; and so those Disrespects do not give *him* any painful resentment which gall, cut, and wound a Proud Man to the Heart. And thus being indifferent to the Opinions of Men, he lives under no constraint, nor is a Slave to their unreasonable Passions and Humours, but at liberty to follow his own innocent Inclinations,

L

146 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

tions, and to act as his Reason directs, and that because he neither courts their Praise, nor fears their Censure. And because he does not, as he need not, Sacrifice his Inclinations to their Opinion, so much less his Duty or Conscience, and so he goes on quietly in his own way, does his Duty in silence and singleness of Heart ; a great deal of good with a little noise, as regarding the Praise of God more than the Praise of Men. In short, the Humble Man dwells low, having his Habitation in the Valleys, beneath the Winds and Storms of Passion, which all fly over his Head, without molesting his Quiet, or discomposing his Calm, and so he enjoys that serene Ease and profound Rest in himself, that Sabbath of the Mind, which is better than all the Noise, Bustle, and Phantastic Appearance that Pride makes in the World.

9. Little do the Great and Proud Men of the World think what Rest the Poor Humble Man enjoys. They themselves are the *weary* and the *heavy laden*, weary in seeking ways to greaten and advance themselves, and heavy laden with the weight of a Passion which they can never satisfy. And yet they will not lay it down, but hug and embrace their Burthen. They live in a Storm, and sleep in a Tempest, can find no rest at *home* because of the concern they are in, whether others think so well of them as they do of *them-*

A Treatise concerning Humility. 147

themselves; nor *abroad*, because of the continual Disappointments and Vexations which they meet with there. Mean while, the Humble Man whose dwelling is at the foot of the Hill, knows none of those ruffling winds of Passion which molest those whose Seat is upon the Top of it, but possesses his Soul in his Patience. *Divine Saviour who inviteſt the weary and heavy laden to come unto thee, and promiſeſt them reſt if they will, help us to answer thy gracious Call, to come unto thee, to take thy ſweet Yoke upon us, and to learn of thee to be Meek and Lowly in Heart, that we may find that Reſt unto our Souls, which thou only canſt give, and which they that follow thee in Meekneſs and Humility are only qualified to receive.*

S E C T. III.

A further Commendation of the Excellency of Humility, from the Ornament which it gives to the Behaviour.

1. **B**Y Behaviour I underſtand chiefly the manner of ordering our Converſation, that is, the Communication of our Thoughts. For what elſe does *Converſing* mean? And the good manner of doing this, is *good Behaviour*. I know that Behaviour is generally refer'd to the Motions and Ge-

148 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

stures of the Body. And I do not deny but that they are concern'd in it, but then it must be as they are significant of the Sentiments of the Mind. For as for Motions that carry in them no manner of meaning or signification, I know no great purpose to which they serve, or reason why they should be valued. Now there are two ways of communicating our Thoughts, and so of conversing, *Words* and *Motions*. For there are certain Motions that are as truly, though not altogether so distinctly, expressive of our Minds as any words can be; and one may gather what posture a Man's Soul is in, what Passion rules there, and how he stands affected towards us, by the ayre of his Countenance, by the turn of his Eye, and some other movements of his Body, with as much, and sometimes more certainty and plainness, than if he himself were to describe it to us in so many words. Besides that a Man cannot so well dissemble in his Looks as he can in his Words.

2. So then more distinctly, Behaviour is the manner of ordering our Words and Motions, those being the two ordinary Signs whereby we express the sense of our Minds. And the doing this well, that is the good manner of ordering these two ways whereby we converse, is *good Behaviour*, good Manners, *Civility* or *Genteelness*. Which does
not

A Treatise concerning Humility. 149

not consist in a few formal Cringes, or a set of empty insignificant Gesticulations or Postures, or in a modish Dress, or fashionable Attire, much less in a confident Ayre, a positive Look, an undaunted Assurance, a pert Forwardness, or an assuming Hardiness, looking people *in* the Face, and *out* of Countenance, but in such a way or manner of Conversation, and in so ordering our Words and Motions, the two great Instruments of it, as to say nothing or act nothing but what is fit, proper, agreeable, and becoming both of our selves and those whom we Converse with. In becoming all things to all Men, that is I mean, in suiting and accommodating our selves to their different Tempers, Humours and Inclinations, in treating every one according to their Quality and Condition, either by Birth or Education, in putting on that Ayre which befits both our selves and them, and in managing our Discourse and Movement so, as to betray no undue posture of Soul, no unhandsome disposition of Mind, and particularly, no disaffection to those in whose Company we are. To say all at once, in such a way of Address, as to render our selves easie and inoffensive, pleasing and agreeable, that so Conversation may truly be, what it was intended it should be, a Blessing and a Convenience, and not a Burthen to Society. He

150 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

that carries himself thus, behaves himself well, and though he knows neither how to manage his Hat, nor to set his Wigg, I shall venture to call him a truly genteel, and a right well-bred Man.

3. I confess a Man had need have a great deal of Judgment and Prudence, and Experience, or at least that which answers to Experience, Reflection and Observation ; he had need also have a great deal of Knowledge of Human Nature, of the World, and of Himself too ; in short, he had need be a *Wise* Man to be able to come up to this Character, to consider what is just and fit to be said or done to all Persons, in all Circumstances, and upon all Occasions. And I doubt that abundance of those who pass for genteel and well-bred Men, would be found to come short if they were to be tried by this measure, which yet seems to be the true Notion of Civility or good Manners, or at least of all that is of a valuable Consideration in it ; and him I take to be the best Manner'd Man that comes nearest to it. There are I know certain arbitrary Usages and Modes of Deportment, which the custom of the World has set up for Civility and good Breeding ; and a Man must a little comply with them to avoid being singular and ridiculous ; but this is all that is material and substantial in it, and he that has
this,

this, need not be very nice upon the other. For Civility is founded in Reason and good Sense, and in the Exigencies of Society which would be unpleasant and uncomfortable without it, and is the accomplishment of reasonable Creatures, and not of Monkeys, or dancing Mares. Nay it is a part of Morality, not to say of Christianity it self, one of whose particular Precepts it is, that we should be *Courteous*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 8.

4. By this it may appear of what use, consequence and importance, Civility and good Behaviour is, indeed of much greater than is commonly imagined, as being a *Social Qualification*, the very indearment of Society, and one of the most entertaining sweetnesses of Human Life, and so not only an Accomplishment, but a Vertue. And consequently whatever serves or contributes to it, must needs be a thing of great excellence, as being so very serviceable to the interest of Society. But now this Humility does, and that in a high degree. It adorns our Behaviour, that is, it makes our Behaviour good Behaviour. And accordingly St. Peter calls it the *Ornament of a meek and quiet spirit*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 4. And this Ornament he opposes to those vain Ornaments of plaiting the Hair, wearing of Gold, and putting on of Apparel, as the better and more becoming Ornament of the two. And indeed

152 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

there is no such Ornament as that of Humility, nothing that fits so well upon us, that so agrees to our Condition, that becomes us so well, that so sets off and graces our Conversation, that gives such an advantage to our Discourse, such an Agreeableness to our Motions, and such a sweetness to our whole Deportment, and in fine, that renders us so easy, so amiable, and so acceptable to those who are any way concern'd with us. So that the same may be said of Humility, that *Solomon* says of a Father's Instruction, that it shall be an *Ornament of Grace unto our Head, and Chains about our Neck. Prov. 1. 9.*

5. Humility must needs be an Ornament to our Behaviour, because every body loves it, and is pleased with it in another, though the Bias of corrupt Nature inclining so much on the side of Pride, may turn them off from practicing it themselves. However it pleases where it is not practiced, and has the Commendation even of those whose Hearts are too full of self-love to give it Admittance. It pleases even the very Proud. And that because there is nothing offensive, disrelishing, or ungrateful in Humility. It does not awe or oppress its Inferiours with its greatness, nor disgust or offend its Superiours by an unyielding and uncompliant sturdiness. Nor insist too much with its Equals upon
Rights

A Treatise concerning Humility. 153

Rights and Priviledges. But chiefly, because by assuming so little to it self, and by being so ready to pay to every one their due respect, it cuts off all suspicion of *Rivalship*, Emulation and Pretension, which must needs render it very acceptable to all those to whom these things are offensive, that is indeed to most Men.

6. I might further say, that Humility adorns our Behaviour as it is a *conversable* Vertue. A Vertue that seems as it were design'd on purpose to form Men for Society, to fit them for the mutual intercourses of Life, to endear Conversation, to make them easie and acceptable one to another, and so to supply the want of that Education which all Men have not the Power nor the Happiness to attain to. For every Man can't be a Scholar, nor can every Man be a Courtier. But every Man may be Humble, and that supplies all. For what does Education do more than act the part of Humility? Little indeed, or at least that is worth much. Only there is this difference, that what Education does upon a Principle of worldly fineness, Humility doe upon a Principle of Vertue and Religion. The same thing upon a better Principle. For it renders us Conversable, Familiar, Affable, Courteous, of easie Access, and of as easie Address, modest in proposing our own sense of things, patient of Contradiction, and backward

154 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

ward to Contradict, free to Commend, and as unwilling to find fault, especially with Strangers, and those who are above us. It sweetens our Temper, plains and smooths our Humour, files off the roughnesses of our Passions, with all that ill Nature which covers it self under the fashionable pretence of the *Spleen*, and so almost in the very literal sense *polishes* our Conversation.

7. Humility may well be said to contribute to our good Behaviour, since it is it self a part, not to say the whole of it. For the great secret of good Breeding, consists in *mutual cession*, or giving place ; that which the Apostle calls in honour preferring one another, *Rom. 12. 10.* That is, in a voluntary and alternate yielding to each other in the Expressions of Difference and Respect, and treating others as above our selves, as far as the order of the World will permit. An eminent Example of which, we have in *Abram's* treatment of *Lot*, *Gen. 13. 9.* And no doubt the good Patriarch did sincerely and without complement, what the Men of the World imitate and personate. For as fond as they are of their State and Grandeur, they are fain to act the part of Humility, that they may appear Civil and well Bred. For open and *bare-fac'd* Pride is the greatest Clownishness in the World, and therefore however she may strut and swell at home,
she

A Treatise concerning Humility. 155

she finds it convenient to borrow the *Mask* of Humility when she goes abroad and makes her Visits. Then how Modest, how Condescending, how Self-denying, how disclaiming of all Merit and of all Praise, how abounding in all the instances of a respectful difference, when perhaps there is little or nothing of all this meant. Which makes what the World calls Breeding and Courtly Behaviour, to be little better than an Art of Hypocrisy and Dissimulation, a more cleanly and refined sort of Abuse. But still however, this shews that Humility, even in the Judgment of these very Men, is the best Breeding, since they are fain to act it to recommend themselves and their Behaviour. And so far they are right, only how were it to be wish'd, and how much better would it be, if instead of the *form* of Humility, they would endeavour to put on the true *Spirit* of it, that so they might do that with ease which they now do with difficulty, and that with truth and sincerity, which they now do fallaciously, and with a kind of Theatrical Ostentation,

8. Humility becomes every Body, but especially those that are Great. It is a Vertue that indeed loves not Height and Dignity, but yet which shines most Brightly from a high Station. To see a Poor Man Humble, or an Ignorant Man Humble, though 'tis what he ought to be, and what well becomes him,
yet

156 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

yet it is too much expected from him, to be thought any thing extraordinary. And let him be never so Humble, he will not please so much by being so, as he would offend by being otherwise. But now to see a Great Man Humble in the midst of his Honours and Riches, in the full tide of his Prosperity, in the throng of his Admirers, amidst the submissions of his Attendants, the applauses of Flatterers, and the Acclamations of the People, *it is the voice of a God and not of a Man*, to see him forget his Quality, lay aside his State, and descend to an easie and familiar Converse with a Person of a mean and inferiour Condition ; or to see a Learned Man discourse an Ignorant and Illiterate Rustic with a familiar and unaffected simplicity, as if the other were as Wise as himself ; nothing certainly among all the great things of the World, affords so charming a Scene as this. And let not any Man think that he lessens or degrades himself by so doing. No Man is the less for his Humility. It is indeed a Littleness, but a Littleness that supposes Greatness, and that argues a truly great and generous Mind. *Magnorum humil. 20. est ista Psillitas*, as St. *Austin* says, it is the Littleness of a Great Man.

9. And how much more were it to be wish'd, that the Great Men of the World would study to become thus Little, than that
Little

A Treatise concerning Humility. 157

Little Men would affect to become Great. For alas, what is all the Greatness of this World? No Man is truly the Greater for that which the World calls Greatness, such as Wealth, Honour, Splendid Equipage, Train of Attendants, &c. This is the Greatness of a Man stuffed out with Cloaths, a Greatness which is Foreign to him, and whereof he himself makes the least part. And if Pride be added to it, 'tis then the Greatness of a *Disease*. However, 'tis that which can't please a Wise Man, and which has corrupted many a good one, and which with all its shew and Lustre can keep none of us from *Dying*, and which it self also must Dye with us. For that I think in the worst Sense Dyes with us, which though it descends upon our Heirs, yet goes not with us into the other World, where 'tis certain that Worldly Greatness has no place. There is no Chair of State there for the Man with the *Gold Ring and Goodly Apparel*. But Humility is true Greatness, and to become thus Little now, is the way to be Great for ever.

SECT.

S E C T. IV.

*The Excellency of Humility further considered,
from its being a Disposition for Grace.*

I. **T**HE Grace of God with the Order and Oeconomy of it, is a thing of a large and of a very high Consideration, and may be justly reckoned among the *sublimiora* (the things that are hard to be understood) of Divinity. This Knowledge is indeed too Wonderful and Excellent for me, I cannot attain unto it. Only for the present purpose it may suffice to say, that by Grace here I understand in the general, the inward operation of God's Spirit supernaturally assisting our Natural Faculties, so as to enable them to act for, and attain a Supernatural End. Or in plainer and more familiar words, that Divine Assistance whereby we are disposed and enabled to keep God's Commandments, and to lead Good and Christian Lives.

2. How the Spirit of God works upon our Minds I know not, and how the Motions and Workings of it are consistent with our Liberty, at least according to some Mens Divinity, would perhaps put our Philosophy pretty hard to't to explain. In the general I think it most safe and reasonable to suppose
that

A Treatise concerning Humility. 159

that the Holy Spirit of God works upon our Minds in such a way as is proportionable to our Natures ; (the design of Grace not being to destroy Nature, but to perfect and improve it) and since there are but two Principles or Motives of Action, *viz* either the *reason* which we perceive why a thing should be done, or the *sense* of *Pleasure* which we find in the doing of it, I further think that the manner of that Divine Operation which we call *Grace*, cannot be more Rationally and Intelligibly explain'd, than (according to the Hypothesis of a Modern Philosopher) by the way of *Light*, or by the way of *Sentiment* ; these being the Two Principles whereby we act, and there being no other conceivable Motive of our Determinations, but either the *Reason* which we see in a thing, or the *Pleasure* which we feel from it.

3. If then we may be allowed to speak of things according to our Conceptions of them (and I know not how we can speak of them any otherwise) we shall find it necessary to say that the Grace of God which helps our Infirmities, and assists us in the performance of Christian Duties, is either Grace of *Light*, or Grace of *Sentiment*. Grace of *Light* is that Operation of the Divine Spirit which opens the view of our Minds, and discovers to us the Beauty of Vertue, and the Reasonableness

160 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

nableness of our Duty. Grace of Sentiment, is that operation of the Spirit which makes our Duty pleasant and delectable to us, or which gives us a sense of pleasure in the doing of it, making us to *taste* as it were, as well as to *see* it. But the precise manner how either of these are done, I pretend not to Explain.

4. However as to the substance of the Notion, I think we cannot well conceive otherwise of it ; and that it may not appear Novel, 'tis to be observ'd, that though it has received great Imbellishment and Improvement from a Modern Pen, yet the ground of it is in St. *Austin*, as is plain from these remarkable words of his, which the forementioned Author also produces.

*De Peccatorum me-
ritis & Remissione.
Lib. 2. Cap. 17.*

*Nolunt homines facere quod
justum est, sive quia latet an
justum sit, sive quia non delectat.*

*Tanto enim quidq; vehementius volumus, quan-
to certius quam bonum sit novimus, eoq; delecta-
mur ardentius.... Ut autem innotescat quod
latebat, & suave fiat, quod non delectabat, gra-
tie Dei est, &c.* Men says he, will not do what is Just, either because it is not known to them whether it be Just or no, or else because it does not delight them. For we will every thing by so much the more vehemently, by how much the more certainly we know how good it is, and by how much
the

A Treatise concerning Humility. 161

the more ardently we are delighted with it. But that it may be made known to us what lay hid, and may become sweet, what did not delight us, is of the Grace of God. To the same purpose a little after Cap. 19. in the same Book he points out these two sorts of Grace under the distinguishing Characters of *Certa Scientia*, and *Delectatio Victrix*, certain Knowledge, and Victorious Delectation. Where he also further tells us, that when we implore God's help to do and to fulfil Righteousness, what else do we ask, but that he should open to us what lay hid from us, and make that sweet and pleasant to us which did not delight us. *Cum autem ab illo illius adjutorium deprecamur ad faciendam perficiendamq; justitiam, quid aliud deprecamur quam ut aperiat quod latebat, & suave faciat quod non delectabat.* So that according to the Doctrine of St. Austin, the Grace of God is Knowledge and Pleasure, which are but other words for Light and Sentiment, the former informing the Understanding, and the latter preventing, moving and attracting the Will, by giving it a kind of * Natural Love and Inclination to that which is good, and which indeed as such ought to be chosen by us

* I say a kind of Natural Love, because indeed it is *Supernatural* as to the Principle, and *Natural* only as that signifies a Love of Inclination, whereby we are carried to the doing of a thing, for the Pleasure or Delight which we find in it, and not for *Extrinsic Reasons or Motives.*

M

upon

162 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

upon a mere Intellectual View, or sole conviction of the Mind, but we have an evil concupiscence in us, and 'tis fit there should be a contrary weight to counterballance it. Pleasure to attract, as well as light to convince.

5. For I look upon Grace as the Suppletory of corrupt Nature, and a Remedy against Original Sin, and a Counterpoise to the weight of that evil Concupiscence which dwells in us, and so to bear date since the fall, as being the Purchase and Procurement of the Mediatour. And accordingly it is called the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who being the Head of the Church and the great Steward of God's Household, that gives them their Meat in due Season, ought I suppose to be acknowledged as the *Dispenser* of this Grace, since of his fullness as St. *John* says, we have all received, *John* 1. 16. And there is no doubt, but that it being dispens'd by him who is the Wisdom of the Father, there is a most wise Order and an excellent Oeconomy in the distribution of this Grace. For an infinitely perfect Mind can do nothing arbitrarily and without reason. But what that order is, though 'tis what I should be glad to learn if I knew who could teach me, yet not knowing where to find that Instructor, I must be content to leave it as one of those *secret things* which belong to God, and to wait the Revelation of it in another State.

6. In

A Treatise concerning Humility. 163

6. In the mean while that which is of a nearer concern to our purpose at present, is this. That since the Grace of God is the great Instrument of our Regeneration and Sanctification, the Seed of the new Birth, the Medicine of sick Nature, and the step whereby we ascend to Glory, it plainly and necessarily follows, that whatever serves to dispose us for the reception of Grace, a thing so useful and necessary both to Goodness and Happiness, must needs be allowed to have a very eminent degree of Excellence. For the goodness of the means always takes its measure from, and bears proportion to the goodness of the end. But now that Humility disposes those that have it for the reception of Grace, we are assured by St. *James* in these words, *God resisteth the Proud, but giveth Grace unto the Humble, James 4. 6.* Which words seem to refer to that Parallel Text in the *Proverbs*, *Surely he scorneth the Scorners, but he giveth Grace unto the Lowly, Prov. 3. 34.* Grace in all senses, both as it signifies favour, and as it signifies the inward Operation of the Holy Spirit assisting our Infirmities, which is (next to Glory) the greatest favour. And because it is so, I know not why it should not be comprehended, and that though the word in the strict and primary sense of it should be allowed to signify favour. That it signifies so very often, especially in the Old Testament

164 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

cannot be denied. But that it signifies so throughout the Scripture (as a Learned Man will have it) I cannot so readily admit. That one place of St. Paul (not to alledge any more instances at present) seems a just Exception to the contrary. *My Grace is sufficient for thee, 2 Cor. 12. 9.* Where both the circumstance of the Case, and the coherence of the Text seem to concur in making it necessary by Grace here to understand the Assistance of God's Spirit. St. Paul had been under some violent Temptation, and had prayed three times that it might be removed from him. To which the Answer was, my Grace is sufficient for thee, as much as to say, to uphold and support thee under this Temptation, tho' I do not see fit to remove it yet. Which sense as it best agrees to the Case, so is it not a little confirm'd from what immediately follows, *for my strength is made perfect in weakness*, as much as to say, that my Divine Power in upholding and supporting is then most eminent and manifest, when Men are in a state of Natural impotence and disability, unable to help themselves. And to this I further add, that this place of St. Paul seems parallel to another place of the same Apostle, *viz. there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to Man, but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with*
the

A Treatise concerning Humility. 165

the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it, 1 Cor. 10. 13. These Texts seem both to intend the same thing, and to refer to the strengthening and assisting Grace of God's Spirit, inabling us to resist and withstand Temptations, which is that Grace of God which was sufficient for St. Paul, and is sufficient for all Christians, tho' they may not have it in such a measure as he had.

7. To this sense it seems also reasonable to apply those two places of the Prophet *Isaiah, to this Man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word, Isa. 66.* And again, *thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble Spirit, &c. Chap. 57.* This it seems is God's Dwelling-place upon Earth, the Tabernacle of his Rest, the Soul of an Humble and Lowly-minded Man. But now how does God dwell in us but by his Spirit, and by the Gifts and Graces of it. And therefore this again shews that Humility is a disposition for Grace. As does also that Beatitude of our Saviour Christ, *Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* For if by Vertue of this Beatitude, the poor in Spirit (by whom we are chiefly to understand the Humble) are intitled to

166 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

the Kingdom of Heaven, then by consequence they must be supposed to be equally intitled to the Grace of God's Spirit, since without Grace there can be no Glory.

8. In the Old Creation we read of a void and inform Mass, and that then the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the Waters. 'Tis so in like manner in the New. Humility is that *Mystical Void* which is the Theatre of the Divine Operation, upon which the Holy Spirit of God acts by his Gracious,

* Natural is here taken as 'tis opposed to Moral, and not as it is opposed to Supernatural.

as upon the other he did by his * Natural Influences. Humility is a state of Self-emptiness, and the emptiness of it is its Capacity, that which

disposes it for, and makes it capable of the Divine Inspirations. For one Qualification for being fill'd, is to be empty, and if we will receive of *his* fullness, we must be empty in our *selves*. He indeed is full, and willing to communicate of his fullness, and the fountain of Grace is always open, and always running ; and accordingly, our Saviour in his Discourse with the Woman of *Samaria*, compares it to a well of Living Water, *John 4*. But there is some disposition requisite on our part, and that is to be empty when we

De Verbis Dom.
Sermo. 55.

come to draw at it ; for as St. *Austin* says, *Tam largo Fonti vas inane admoveendum est*. We had

A Treatise concerning Humility. 167

had need put an empty Vessel to the mouth of so large a Fountain. And this is the reason that St. Bernard gives of the great diversity and inequality in the distribution of Grace, why some have so much, and some so little; which he says is not that God is either a needy or a covetous dispenser of it, but that where empty Vessels are wanting, the Oyl must needs be at a stand.

Unde spiritualis gratie inopia tanta quibusdam, cum aliis copia tanta exuberet? Profecto nec avarus, nec inops est gratie distributor. Sed ubi vana vasa desunt, stare oleum necesse est. He alludes to the story of the Widow's Oyl multiplied by the Prophet Elisha, 2 Kings 4. 6.

*In Ascensione
Dom. Serm. 6.*

9. God promises his Grace to the Humble, and therefore there must be something in Humility that disposes Men for Grace. This Heavenly Rain in this differs from the Natural, that it falls chiefly in the lower places, whereas that falls indifferently. But herein however it resembles the Natural Rain, that however it falls, yet it stays and lodges in the lower Grounds, in the Valleys, which also is the chief place for Springs and Fountains, according to that observation of the Psalmist, *he sendeth the Springs into the Valleys, which run among the Hills*, Psal. 104. Now to these Valleys, both St. Austin and St. Bernard compare the Humble and Low-spirit-

168 A Treatise concerning Humility.

ed Man. *Si Humiles sunt valles*
De Verbis Apostoli. Serm. 9. sunt, quod infuderis capiunt, non
dimitunt. Si venerit aqua su-

per altitudinem decurrit & destitit. Si ad
Concauum & humilem locum, & capitur &
stat. So St. Austin. If they are Humble, they
 are Valleys, they take what is infused and do
 not let it go. If water falls upon a high place,
 it runs down and falls off, but if upon a con-
 cavous and low place, it is there received, and
 there it stands. He might have further ad-
 ded, and enriches it, and makes it fruitful.
 And so 'tis with the hearts of Humble Men,
 those Spiritual Valleys, they receive the Grace
 of God and keep it, (there being nothing in
 the Spirit of Humility that is offensive to the
 Spirit of God; that grieves or provokes him
 to depart) and being thus under the standing
 and remaining Influences of the Dew of
 Heaven, they grow Fruitful with it, and abound
 in every good word and work; and so as
 the Psalmist says, *The Valleys are so thick with*
Corn, that they rejoyce and sing.

10. The Humble Man is the Tree planted
 by the Rivers of Water, that bringeth forth
 his fruit in his Season, and whose Leaf does
 not wither. For where are the Rivers of
 Water but in the Valleys. Surely in the Val-
 leys says St. Bernard. For who
Serino de Sancto Benedicte Abba does not see says he, that the
te. Torrents do decline the steep places
 of

A Treatise concerning Humility. 169

of the Hills, and divert to the middle lowness of the Valley. So truly says he, God resists the Proud, and gives grace to the Humble. He thrives and prospers, and is fruitful in his low but fat and rich Soil, while the Proud Man on the top of his bleak and barren Mountain, for want of taking or retaining this Spiritual Dew, dries up, hardens and withers. For he is too high for the Grace of God, as having no sense of his need of it, nor can the Spirit of God delight to dwell with him, who has so much of the Spirit of the Devil. No, 'tis the Man of an Humble Spirit with whom God declares he will take up his Residence and Abode; and our Saviour comparing the Grace of the Spirit to *Water*, gives us a hint to conclude that it will not rest upon a Proud Heart. For Water we know does not love high places. And the same may be said of the Divine Grace. And therefore says St. Bernard again, *Altitudo est, illuc non perveniunt fluentia gratiæ.* He is a high place (speaking of a Proud Man) the streams of Grace do not reach thither. No they do not, but they descend from thence into the lower ground, into the Heart of the Humble and Poor in Spirit, who receives that Grace which the Proud Man rejects and is not worthy of, and so has a double portion of the Spirit, the Proud Man's share, and his own too.

*In Vigil. Natalis
Dom. Serm. 4.*

170 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

11. If a more distinct account be desired, and it be ask'd what that is in Humility which makes it such a special disposition for Grace. I Answer, that besides that Self-emptiness is a proper qualification for being replenished according to that in the *Magnificat*, *He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away*; and besides that the Spirit of Humility is most agreeable to the Holy Spirit of God the Lord and giver of Life, it is further to be considered that the Humble Man is most sensible of his Sins, and consequently most penitent for them, and so will be most earnest in desiring Grace against them, as well as Pardon for them. He is also to be supposed to have the greatest sense of his Wants, and of his Unworthiness to have them reliev'd, of his Infirmities and of his Unworthiness to have them assisted, and consequently must be presumed to be more vehement in his Desires, and more earnest in his Prayers to have assistance for the one, and relief for the other. To which we may further add, that an Humble Man has a more deep sense of his *dependence* upon God, (that being one principal Consideration that makes him Humble) and so must more intirely rely upon him for the supply of all his wants, and of Grace among the rest, there being nothing more indispensably necessary for us than that. As also
that

A Treatise concerning Humility. 171

that Humility makes a Man to be of a more teachable, tractable and obedient Spirit, easie to be directed, inclinable to follow, willing to be made Wiser and Better, and as more ready to wait *for* the Grace of God, so also to wait *upon* it, to yield up himself to its Divine Conduct, to be led and govern'd by it, so as not to receive it *in vain*, or to do despite to the Spirit of Grace, who as all other Guests loves to abide where he meets with a kind Reception and Entertainment.

12. And thus we may in some measure conceive why and how Humility disposes for Grace. Only for the more right understanding of this matter, I think fit to superadd this further Caution, that when 'tis said that Humility disposes for Grace, I would not be understood to mean for the *first* Grace, since then we should difference and distinguish our selves, and should have something which we have not received, contrary to the Doctrine of *St. Paul*, and so even our Humility it self would be a just occasion for Pride and Boasting. No, we do not prevent God by predisposing our selves for any Grace or Favour of his, but he prevents us with the Blessings of his Goodness, and his Grace is the Principle, Progress, and Complement of all the good that is in us, even of Humility it self. And therefore when that is said to dispose us for Grace, the meaning is only
for

172 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

for more Grace, or for a greater and further increase of it. In the same sense that the good use and due improvement of that Grace which we have already received disposes for more, according to what our Lord himself tells us, *Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more Abundance, Mat. 13. 12.*

13. But then which is the conclusion of all this, what an excellent Vertue is true Christian Humility, which serves to the most excellent Ends and Purposes, and particularly by which we are disposed and qualified to have Grace, *whereby we may serve God acceptably with Reverence and Godly fear*, as the Apostle speaks, *Heb. 12. 28.* And therefore

I end this Consideration with that of St. Bernard, arguing the same Conclusion from the very same Principle; *Quid Humilitate ditius, quid preciosius invenitur, quâ nimirum Regnum Cœlorum emitur, & divina gratia acquiritur? Sicut scriptum est, Beati pauperes spiritu, quoniam ipsorum est Regnum Cœlorum, & apud Apostolum, Deus superbis resistit, Humilibus autem dat gratiam.* What more Rich than Humility, what more pretious is there to be found. Since by it the Kingdom of Heaven is purchased, and the Divine Grace acquired? As it is written, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven; and as 'tis said by the Apostle,*

A Treatise concerning Humility. 173

Apostle, God resists the Proud, but gives Grace to the Humble.

14. And thus I have shewn the great excellency of Humility upon these four distinct Heads of Consideration, the Reasonableness of it, the Quiet and Repose which it gives to the Mind, the Ornament which it gives to the Behaviour, and lastly from its being a Disposition for Grace. There are here some other things which might be considered, but being too obvious to be made the subjects of distinct Sections, which I am not willing to multiply more than needs must, I shall just touch upon them in a Curfory way, leaving them to be further digested and enlarged upon by the Reader at his leisure, to whom in the handling of any Subject, much more in so copious a one as this is, something ought to be left.

15. To shew then more fully the excellency of Humility it may be further considered, that it is a great advantage to *Wisdom* and Knowledge. They that will view the Stars with the most clear and distinct prospect, must do it from a deep Pit; and so the best Foundation for Science, is a Low and Humble state of Mind. For the desire of Knowledge being Natural, nothing but our Opinion that we have it, can hinder us from endeavouring after it. This the Proud Man has, he is already wise in his own conceit, as wise as
any

174 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

any Body else is, or at least as he need to be, and so there is a stop put to all Thoughts or Endeavours of growing Wiser, and consequently to all further improvement, which in great civility is left to those that *need* it. Whereas the Humble Man thinking himself to be of that number, as having a low opinion of his Intellectual Attainments, as of all other things pertaining to himself, is more heedful and diligent in his search after Truth, and in consulting the Oracle of Wisdom, whether by his own private Meditation, or by the instruction of others, and so though on lower ground, yet he sees a great deal further. And thus Humility is a Key of Knowledge, especially in Divine matters, where a teachable Spirit, and a Mind willing to learn, and be advised by those who are wiser than our selves, is of greater consequence than brightness of understanding.

16. The same may be applied to *Goodness*, whereof the Humble Man thinking he has but little, endeavours after more, and *not thinking himself to have already attained, or to be already perfect, he follows after, and forgetting those things which are behind, he reaches forth unto the things which are before, and presses towards the Mark for the Prize of the high calling, Phil. 3. 12, 13, 14.* Whereas the Spiritually Proud Man, the Conceited Pharisee, that says: God I thank thee, whose Prayer runs
so

A Treatise concerning Humility. 175

so much upon the rehearſal of his Vertues, as to forget the confeſſion of his Sins, thinking himſelf all Perfection, and with the Church of *Laodicea*, to be Rich and to have need of nothing, when at the ſame time he is Poor, Blind, Naked, Wretched and Miſerable, he apprehends no occaſion he has of endeavouring to grow better, and accordingly he does not, notwithstanding that he has perhaps as much reaſon to do it as another Man. But ſo it is, the Valleys thrive and flouriſh, while the lofty Hills grow dry and barren.

17. It may alſo be conſidered as a further commendation of Humility, that 'tis the ſureſt and moſt direct way to Honour and Reſpect. This indeed is a thing of leſſer moment in it ſelf, and what Humility can well be without. But 'tis what is greatly valued by moſt Men, and is ſo far juſtly to be valued as it ſerves to higher and more important Purpoſes, to qualify him that has it to glorify God, and do good to Men. And ſince both *Solomon* and our *Saviour Chriſt* have both taken notice of it, it would be an Omiſſion hardly excuſable not to beſtow a Reflection upon it. Says the Wiſe Man, *before Honour is Humility*, Prov. 15. 33. And ſays the Wiſdom of God, *he that Humbles himſelf ſhall be Exalted*, Luke 14. 11. That is, Reſpected and had in Eſteem. For ſo the occaſion

176 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

caſion of our Saviour's Diſcourſe requires it ſhould be underſtood in that place, as both following and being given, as the reaſon of that ſaying of his, *then ſhalt thou have Worſhip in the preſence of them that ſit at meat with thee.* To verify this, it is not neceſſary that it ſhould be ſo among all ſorts of Men. Neither I think *is* it. For among ordinary People, Humility is not ſo much regarded. And a Man may Humble himſelf long enough before they will *Exalt* him. On the contrary, they perhaps will be the firſt that ſhall pull him down lower, and keep him down when he is ſo. Here if my Experience and Obſervation be right, a Man is generally valued according to that value which he ſets upon himſelf, and if he take ſtate, look great, and carry it high with them, he will find Reſpect and *Worſhip* among them ; but if he gives himſelf a lowly and ſubmiſſive Ayre, *they* then take that ſtate upon them which *he* declines, and his Humility does but ſerve to make him Cheap and Contemptible with them. Thus it is very often among vulgar People, upon whom the *Pearl of Humility* is but ill beſtow'd ; they know not the value of it, and will many times even tread it in the very Dirt. But among thoſe of better Quality, and more refined Education, and who have a juſter and more rectify'd ſenſe of things, it is far otherwiſe. There the
Jewel

A Treatise concerning Humility. 177

Jewel is understood, and valued according to its worth. There the Humble Man finds his due respect, and the lower he depresses himself, the more will he be Exalted. Neither is this without reason. For Humility besides the excellency of its Temper, and the greatness of the Vertue, shews a good understanding, and a right judgment of a Man's self, and so intitles him to respect, which Men are also the more willing to pay to the Humble Man, because he is so little just to himself. Whereas Pride, besides the folly and weakness which it betrays, and want of true worth to *deserve* respect, it also hinders and disaffects Men from giving it, by its own preventing forwardness to usurp it. And thus the Proud Man drives away from him that Honour and Respect which he so greedily hunts after; and the Humble Man that flies from it is persued by it. By which means, those words of our Lord come to have their accomplishment, *Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

A strange turn and transposal of Events, and such as no doubt will be as differently received. The Humble Man bears his *Exaltation* handsomely and well, with a temperate Spirit, and well composed Mind, knowing how little he deserves it, and that he receives no real addition of worth from it.

N

And

178 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

And so looks upon himself as the same Man still, and as distinguish'd from others not so much by the glory of his Light, as by its shining from an higher Orb. But now the Proud Man takes his *Abasement*, Poorly, Miserably, and Contemptibly. He sinks under it, frets and repines at it, struggles with it, fights and contends against it as the *Egyptians* did against the prevailing waters, and to as much purpose. Nothing makes so strange a Figure as a high Spirited Man in a low Condition, especially if fallen into it from a higher. A Proud Man brought down and fallen into Contempt, is one of the pitifullst Creatures in the World. And yet no body pities him, but every one rather tramples upon him, and endeavours to tread him down lower into the Mire, where we must leave him Miserable, till he can either raise his Fortune, or humble his Mind.

18. Again it may be further considered, that Humility is a great Friend to *Contentment*. The Humble Man is always a Contented Man, as thinking any condition or station good enough for him, and most to be much better than he deserves. It also gives a Man a Spirit of Submission and Resignation to God's Providence, which is the best Ground and Foundation of true Contentment. It keeps a Man in that place and order wherein the Providence of God has set him; hinders him

A Treatise concerning Humility. 179

him from making public Disturbances to serve private Ends, from depressing others to exalt and advance himself, and so contributes to the public Peace and Order of the World. To which also it further serves by making Men submissive to their Betters, and obedient to their Governours, good Servants, and loyal Subjects, by preventing Faction in the State, and Schism in the Church, and by putting a Bar even against *Heresy* it self, whereof Pride is generally either the Mother or the Nurse. Accordingly St. *Austin* calls Pride, *Mater Hereticorum*, *the Mother of Heretics*. Humility is the most Orthodox thing in the World 3 or if it should happen to Err, yet it is not obstinate in its Errours, but ready to acknowledge and relinquish them upon better Information, for which also it stands fairly disposed. Whereas Pride naturally carries Men to Singularities and Innovations in Religion as well as in other things, makes them apt to Err by affecting to be out of the way, and when they do Err it confirms them in their Errours, which a high Spirit is more inclinable to defend, than to renounce or acknowledge. Add to this, that Humility keeps the Peace between Man and Man as well as that of the Public, prevents Anger, or stifles it in the very Birth, cuts off all occasion of Strife and Contention, which

Contra Episto-
lan Marichæi
Cap. 6.

180 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

as Solomon observes, *cometh by Pride*, Prov. 13. 10. deadens the force of Injuries, reconciles Differences, pacifies Resentments, throws a Bridle upon the neck of Ambition, and is the best Remedy against all Envy and Emulation in the World. And 'tis for this Reason, according to St. *Anstin*, that Charity *en- vies not*, because, as it immediately follows, it is not *puffed up*. For he supposes the Apostle to subjoin this latter Character of

Charity as the reason of the former. *De quâ cum dictum esset, Caritas non emulatur, velut si causam quereremus, unde fiat ut non emuletur, continuo subdidit, non inflatur.*

19. But I must not forget further to remark that Humility is an excellent Disposition for *Faith*, which finds the easiest Admission, and enjoys the most undisturb'd Possession in an Humble Mind. How it inclines a Man to receive the Revelations of God, and particularly the Misteries of Christianity, though it does not comprehend the manner, or reason, or possibility of the Article. How it casts down *Imaginations*, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God, or the Belief of what he reveals, and brings into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ. But then if it thus disposes and prepares the way for Faith, it must needs also have a general Influence upon all other

Ver-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 181

Vertues, and upon all good works, even upon the whole Body of Christian Life, which all depends upon the firm Belief of the Truths of Revelation. So that Humility will be found to be at the bottom of all Religion: And accordingly St. Bernard calls it, *Fundamentum custosq; Virtutum*, the Foundation and Guardian of the Vertues. But then if its Influence be so great upon Goodness, it must as much dispose us for *Happiness*, and that's the last thing I shall observe for the Commendation of Humility, and to shew what an excellent Vertue it is, that it qualifies us for Heaven, from whence the Proud Angels fell. And for this we have our Saviour's express word, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* Which for the greater Commendation of Humility is made the first of the Beatitudes.

20. I shall not reckon among the Excellencies of Humility the great *rarity* of it, though that be commonly esteemed as an Excellency. I am rather sorry that so excellent a Vertue should be so *rare*. As indeed I think this is to a very deplorable degree. We all call Christ Master, but where is the Man that learns of him, that learns of him the lesson of *Humility*? We content our selves in knowing that 'tis a good thing, in commending it when it comes in our way, and

182 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

in censuring the want of it in others ; but who endeavours to have it in himself ? We allow it a place in our Morality, nay, even Magnify our Religion for teaching it, calling it a Vertue properly Christian. But we overlook it as much in our Practice as the Heathen Philosophy did in its Morals. God grant us his Grace, that Christianity which is now so well understood, may be better practiced than it is.

C H A P.

C H. A P. V.

The Necessity of Humility considered.

1. **B**Y Necessity here I do not mean that which is *Absolute*, whose Opposite includes a Contradiction, or which excludes all Contingency, as when a thing must absolutely be, and cannot possibly not be, or be otherwise. But I mean a *Conditional* Necessity, or a Necessity upon Supposition, such as that of the Means in reference to that end which cannot be attained without it. For here, though such a means cannot be said to be absolutely Necessary, but Contingent, because absolutely speaking, I may refuse both the End and the Means too ; yet supposing me to be positively and effectually determined upon such an End, it will be necessary for me to will and use that Means, and that because without that Means there is no possibility supposed of obtaining that End. And accordingly such means, however Absolutely contingent, are in this sense, and as the Supposition is now put, not improperly said to be necessary. For indeed it is a real degree of necessity for one thing to follow upon the Position of another, though that other be not necessary to be put. However, it is

184 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

not so great a Necessity as that which is Absolute. But in this Sense I know nothing but God and Eternal Truths that can be said to be necessary. All other things are I think *Absolutely* speaking, but Contingent.

2. The Necessity of a thing imports something more than the mere excellency of it. Every thing that (in the sense before defined) is Necessary, is indeed Excellent, but every thing that is Excellent, is not as such Necessary. Indeed the same thing that is Excellent may also be necessary (as in the present case) but not as such, or for that reason. And accordingly the Excellency of a thing does not infer the Necessity of it. As for Instance, I may commend such a Medicine as an excellent Remedy to Cure such a Disease, and yet it may not be necessary, since 'tis possible that the same Disease may be Cured by another Medicine. But indeed if it cannot, then that Medicine is Necessary as well as Excellent, and the more Excellent because Necessary.

3. Now this is the Case as to *Humility*. It is not only an excellent Means for the procurement of all those good Ends, or to produce all those good, wholesome and desirable Effects, from its Serviceableness to which we have commended its Excellency in the foregoing Chapter, but is also necessary to the Procurement or Production of them ;

A Treatise concerning Humility. 185

them ; so that without it those Ends cannot be procured, and those Effects cannot be produced. It does not only serve to the Repose and Tranquility of the Mind, but there is no such thing as Tranquility of Mind to be had without it. It does not only serve to adorn the Behaviour, but is also a necessary Requisite to that purpose, there being no such thing as Decency or Comeliness of Behaviour to be maintain'd without it. And so in like manner of all the rest. Which by the way is a Consideration further applicable to the setting forth the excellency of Humility, since it is necessary to the production of all the forementioned good Effects, as well as certainly productive of them.

4. But before I proceed any further in shewing the necessity of Humility, I shall prepare the way to it by some general Reflections upon the necessity of the Vertues at large. They are necessary two ways. First, By the Will and Ordination of God. Secondly, in the nature of the thing it self. They are necessary to procure us Admittance into Heaven. And they are necessary to qualify us for the enjoyment of it when we are there. They are necessary both to the possession and to the fruition of that Object wherein our Happiness does consist. These are distinct things, and ought to be distinctly considered.

5. First

186 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

5. First then, the Vertues are necessary Conditions of our Admittance into Heaven. Not that this Necessity is so grounded in the nature of the thing as the other is. No, there is nothing in the nature of the thing it self Absolutely considered that hinders or makes it impossible, but that God may locally admit a Sinner into Heaven if he pleases. But he will not, and he has positively declared that he will not. For so the Apostle tells us expressly, *that without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord.* So then God requires Holiness as the Condition without which no Man shall see him, or be so much as admitted to his Glorious Presence. And so there is a plain necessity of it for that purpose, though not by the Absolute nature of the thing, yet by the settled Will and Appointment of God.

6. Not but that this Will of his has a great deal of Reason in it too. So much that perhaps conditionally speaking, and considering God as acting Wisely, and according to certain measures of Order and Perfection, it may be true to say that he cannot (that is, *Morally cannot*) so much as admit any Man into Heaven without Holiness. But yet Absolutely speaking, or according to his Absolute Power which extends to every thing wherein there is no Contradiction, I think there is no doubt but that he can, there being no natural Repugnance in the thing to it.

A Treatise concerning Humility. 187

It. However, he has declared that he will not, and 'tis certain that God may justly and reasonably require Holiness as the condition without which we shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, and that notwithstanding that Christ has Dyed to open it for us. For though Christ has satisfied to the full for our Sins, as far as concerns the demands of Divine Justice, yet the satisfaction which he made, and the price which he paid for our Redemption being not that very thing which the Law required (for the Law required the punishment of the Offender himself, and that the Soul that Sinn'd should Dye) God might have chosen whether he would have accepted this Satisfaction or no, and as infinite as it was, might have refused it if he had pleased. If therefore he did accept it (which to do was of it self an Act of Grace) he was at liberty to limit and qualifie it with such Conditions as he saw fit either in relation to the Sinner, or in relation to himself, the Glory of his Attributes, or the Order of his Government. And if Repentance and Holiness of Life should appear to him to be Conditions of that Nature, he justly and reasonably might exact and require them as the necessary Conditions of our Admittance into Heaven, And accordingly he has done so, and 'tis now his declared and established Will not to admit any thither without them ; however,
by

188 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

by his Absolute Power he might be supposed able to do otherwise.

7. But it would be to no purpose if he should. And that because Secondly, the Virtues of Christian Life are necessary not only to give us a right of entrance into Heaven, but even to qualify us for the enjoyment of it when we are there, to make us *meet partakers* of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. And this Necessity is not from any positive Institution of God, but is founded in the very Nature of the thing. For there goes something more to make up the Happiness of Heaven, than an outward Object, Place, or State. There must be also an inward Temper and Disposition of Mind to Correspond to it, or else we shall possess only, and not enjoy. Now this Temper is Holiness, a God-like frame and disposition of Mind. For as Happiness is a Relative thing, so God the Object of it, is a Being of Infinite Purity and Perfection; and therefore if we be not in some measure Partakers of that his Divine Nature and Spirit, we shall not be like him, consequently cannot Love him, and consequently cannot Enjoy him. So that Holiness is a natural Disposition for Happiness. And if our very *Bodies* must be changed, put on another Temper, be Refined and Spiritualized to fit them for the Glories of Heaven, and to Inhabit Eternity, as *St. Paul* says they must,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 189

must, when he tells us that this Mortal must put on Immortality, &c. and that Flesh and Blood cannot Inherit the Kingdom of God, much more is it necessary that our *Souls* should be found in a fit and suitable Temper for the enjoyment of so excellent an Object. So that however we may suppose it Absolutely possible for a Man to be admitted to Heaven without Holiness, yet 'tis Absolutely impossible he should be *Happy* without it.

8. Now this Natural Connexion between Holiness and Happiness, does most strongly inforce the Necessity of a Holy and Christian Life, and most effectually shut out all Evasions and Dependencies whereby Men might otherwise deceive and abuse themselves. For if the whole Business and Concern of a Holy Life, rested only in God's Will and Pleasure, if there were no other Necessity of it but what was Arbitrary and of his making, if the Vertues of Christian Life were therefore only good because he commanded them, and therefore only necessary to Happiness because God had tied these things together, by making one of them a condition of the other, then as God *might* Absolutely dispense with his own Laws and Constitutions, and unmake what he had made, so the impenitent Sinner would be apt to flatter himself with hopes that he *would*, (to encourage him in which presumption the Infinite Goodness and Mercy

190 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Mercy of God would afford him a very specious Argument) and as a consequence of this that he might possibly be Happy without being Holy, which therefore he would not think himself so much concern'd to be. But now if there be a Natural and Antecedent Connexion of these things, such as God did not *make* but *find*, if Holiness in the very reason and nature of the thing be necessary to Happiness, then however God might dispense with Arbitrary settlements of his own, yet the Reasons and Natures of things, and those Eternal Relations which they have to each other are Immutable, and so the necessity of Holiness which is founded on these Reasons will be Absolutely Indispensable. Which as it justifies the Wisdom and Goodness of God in requiring such and such Vertues of us, because he knows them to be in themselves necessary for us, so it puts Men under such a strict and binding Obligation to a Holy and Christian Life, as by all the Arts and Devices of Self-flattery they can never Evade.

9.^o And so much of the Necessity of the Vertues in General. Now as to *Humility* in particular, it is to be considered in like proportion that it is necessary (as all other Vertues are) two ways. First, By the Will and Commandment of God. Secondly, In the Nature of the thing it self. And so
it

A Treatise concerning Humility. 191

it has both the Necessity of the Precept, and the Necessity of the Means, as the Language of the Schools expresses it. Which is all the Necessity that any Vertue needs, or indeed can possibly have. For whatever Necessity is more than this, is that Absolute Necessity before spoken of, which as it stands not with Liberty, so neither with Morality ; and consequently Humility would lose all its Excellency (at least as to us) and even cease to be a Vertue, if it were in that sense Necessary.

10. First then, Humility is necessary by the express Will and Commandment of God. It is enjoined us, and required from us by the same Authority that other Duties are. *He hath shewed thee O Man, says the Prophet Micah, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do Justly, and to love Mercy, and to walk Humbly with thy God ? Micah 6. 8.* Here you have Humility rank'd with Justice and Mercy, and made one of the Branches of that Goodness which God has shew'd us in his Law, (the place referred to is the 10th of *Deut. 12, &c.*) and requires of us by that Authority which he has over us. And accordingly says our Saviour Christ, who as a Prophet was to Instruct us in our whole Duty, and to Reveal to us the whole Will of God, to *Teach as well as to Fulfil all Righteousness, Learn*
of

192 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

of me, for I am Meek and Lowly in heart, Mat. 11. 29. He bids us Learn of him, and the reason added *why* we should Learn of him, plainly imports *what* it is that we are to Learn, *viz.* Meekness and Lowliness of Heart. And this our Saviour also calls his *Yoke*, and bids us to take it upon us, take my Yoke upon you ; wherein he plainly signifies it to be an Essential part of his Service, and of our Duty. And accordingly he pronounces a Blessedness upon those that have this temper of Mind, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* St. Paul also makes this to be one part of our Christian Calling. *I therefore,* says he, *the Prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith ye are called,* Ephes. 4. 1. But how shall we do this ? That he tells us in the next words, *with all Lowliness and Meekness, &c.* Again says he in another Exhortation, *Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than themselves,* Phil. 2. 3. And 'tis remarkable that he further presses the same Exhortation from the Example of Christ, with whom he would have us to be like minded. *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus ; who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God ; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form*
of

A Treatise concerning Humility. 193

of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of Men; and being found in fashion as a Man, he humbled himself, &c. ver. 5, 6, 7, 8. The Apostle here sets forth the great and wonderful Humility of Christ, express'd in the profound Submissions of his Incarnation and Passion, and exhorts us to imitate him in the like Spirit and Temper of Mind. In like manner as our Saviour himself does his Disciples in another Case, If I then your Lord and Master have wash'd your feet, ye also ought to wash one anothers feet, John 13. 14. That is, condescend to the meanest Offices whereby you may do good; for says he, I have given you an Example that ye should do, as I have done to you. Again says the Apostle, speaking to those whom he had just before supposed to have put on the New Man, Put on therefore (as the Elect of God, holy and beloved) bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, &c. Colos. 3. 12. Where besides the Exhortation, Humility is here represented as a part of that Spiritual Cloathing which becomes the New Man. And because it does so, St. Peter calls it the Ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which he tells us, is in the sight of God of great Price, 1 Pet. 3. 4. And withal, makes it to be the very Dress and Habit of a Christian, when he bids us to be Cloathed with it: All of you be subject one to another, and

○

be

194 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

be Cloathed with Humility. Which Exhortation he backs with this Reason, *For God resisteth the Proud, and giveth grace to the Humble,* Chap. 5. ver. 5.

11. But it will be of particular concernment to this purpose, to observe the Answer which our Saviour made to his Disciples upon that Ambitious Question which they put to him, to know who should be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. He calls to him a little Child, sets him in the midst of them, and reads them a seasonable Lecture of Humility upon him. Telling them, *that unless they were converted, and became as little Children, they should not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven,* Matth. 18. As much as to say, that unless you lay aside that Spirit of Pride and Ambition, and Affectation of Dominion and Grandeur which was the occasion of your moving this Question to me, and put on the Spirit of Simplicity and Humility, whereof this Child is a Living Emblem, you shall be so far from being greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, that you shall not come there at all. And that by becoming as little Children, our Saviour means the same as becoming so in respect of *Humility*, is plain both from the Occasion upon which the words were spoken, and from the Explanation of them that immediately follows, *whoever therefore shall humble himself as this little Child, &c.*
So

A Treatise concerning Humility. 195

So that here we have our Saviour's expresse declaration of the necessity of Humility in order to Salvation. There is therefore no possible admission (if we will believe him who is Truth it self) into the Kingdom of God, without Conversion from Pride, the putting off that *Devillish* part of the *Old Man*, and the putting on the Spiritual Childhood of Humility. The Gate of Heaven is *low* it seems as well as *strait*, and we must stoop down and bend our selves, even to the dimensions of a *Child*, or else there is no entering in at it.

12. But then Secondly, Humility is also necessary in the Nature of the thing, as well as by the Will of God requiring it from us. And therefore it is that he does require it. 'Tis not to shew his Authority, or to exercise his Dominion, or that he pleases himself as some of the Great ones of the Earth may do, in our Subjection and Inferiority, as if our Lowliness and Humility added any thing to his Greatness and Eminence ; but he requires it of us as he does all other Vertues, because he knows that 'tis in it self just and reasonable, perfective of our Natures, conducive to our Interest, and even necessary to our Welfare and Happiness. And accordingly this account is given by *Moses*, of God's Dispensation with the People of *Israel* in the Wilderness ; *Thou shalt remember all*

196 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the Wilderuess, to humble thee, and to prove thee, and to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his Commandments or no. Dent. 8. 2. And again, Who fed thee in the Wilderuess with Manna, which thy Fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end. Ver. 16. And if God Humbled the Israelites with a design of doing them good by it, then we may justly suppose that when he requires that we should be Humble, 'tis for the same reason, viz. because 'tis for our good to be so.

13. Well, but now Humility is thus necessary in the Nature of the thing Two ways, or to a Twofold End. First, It is necessary to Goodness. And Secondly, It is necessary to Happiness. It is necessary as a Natural means to the former, and as a natural condition of the latter. So that we can neither be Good nor Happy without it. Which makes it as necessary as any Vertue can be.

14. First it is necessary to *Goodness*. How much it *befriends* it was observ'd in the foregoing Chapter, wherein this was assigned as one Reason and Character of its Excellency; that it tends so much to the promotion of Goodness, and our improvement in it, and that it influences the whole Body of Christian Life. But an excellent Medicine may not be

A Treatise concerning Humility. 197

be a necessary one. It is very true, and what we observ'd before. But now this is not the Case here: For Humility is both. It does not only serve to make us good, which is its Excellency, but in such a manner that we cannot be good without it, which is its Necessity. Which will more distinctly appear if we consider,

15. First, that unless a Man be Humble and have a low Opinion of himself, he will not think himself much concern'd to endeavour after Goodness, or if he does, he will content himself with low degrees of it, not because he thinks them to be so, (for then he would endeavour to rise higher) but because he thinks that he needs not to be much better than he is, and so will not be very solicitous to add to his *Stature*. And if he be then a *Dwarf* in Goodness, 'tis but the Natural and necessary consequence of his Pride and Self-conceit. *The whole need not a Physician* says our Saviour, and they that think themselves so, will be sure to be of his Opinion. And therefore a Man had need have an Humble sense of himself, and be thoroughly sensible of his own Defects and Infirmities, or else he will stand at a low pitch of Goodness, for want of apprehending the need that he has of advancing to a higher, So that Humility is not only *service-*
O 3 *able,*

198 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

able, but even *necessary* to our improvement in *Goodness*. I might say the same also as to the first *beginnings* of it, since Humility is the foundation of Repentance, and of newness of Life, to which a sense of a Man's former Vileness is absolutely necessary. But yet the necessity of Humility to Goodness, will further appear if we consider Secondly, that all our Goodness without Humility is nothing worth. For Pride spoils all our Excellencies, covers and buries them as Charity does our *Sins*, utterly defaces the Beauty of all our Vertues, and ruins all our good works, not only those which are done in the spirit of Pride, and from a principle of Vanity, but even all the rest so far as concerns any Character or Denomination of Goodness that might accrue to us from them. 'Tis that *Dead Fly in the Ointment of the Apothecary which causes it to send forth an ill savour, Eccles. 10. 1.* let the other Ingredients be never so rich and good, and the whole never so well prepared. So does Pride by our Vertues, which though they were never so great, and never so many, yet that one Exception, *But he is Proud*, is enough to drown and extinguish them all. Which seems to have been the Case of the Fallen Angels. We do not read of any other fault they had but Pride; in all other respects they seem to have

have fill'd up their Angelical Character, but this was their *cloven Foot*, or rather their giddy *Head* that made them miss their station, and fall from Goodness and Happiness. So that though a Man had all other Graces, Vertues and Endowments, and were in other respects even as an *Angel*, yet without Humility, as St. Paul says of Charity, he *would be nothing*.

16. And thus is Humility necessary to Goodness, both as it disposes us to endeavour after it, and as it derives a value upon it, so as that without it all our Goodness is nothing worth. Upon which double Consideration I may now venture to say, that Humility is the Ground-work of all Religion and Vertue, and the very Foundation upon which the Spiritual Fabric stands. And the lower this Foundation is laid, the stronger is the Building, and the longer it will last. And they that will Build high, must lay the Foundation low, or else the Building it self will quickly become so. But if a Man will presume to Build without this Foundation, especially if he thinks of carrying his work to any considerable height, he does but prepare for a speedier and a larger Ruin. His Building will be like the House that was Built upon the Sand, and he himself like him that Built it, that is a *Fool*, *Mat. 7. 26*. For so our Lord calls him; though what he

200 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

says concerning that matter, is most reasonable to be understood by way of Supposition only. For indeed as to the actuality of the thing, hardly any body Builds at that rate. Only in Spirituals, (where Men are always the greatest Fools, and commit the grossest Oversight) nothing is more common than for Men to Build Castles in the Air, to Project great Heights in Religion, great Devotions, great Austerities, profuse Charities, &c. without a good Foundation of Humility at Bottom. But they Build only for Ruin, for Laughter, and for Repentance. And there-

De Verbis Domini. In Evang. Secundum. Mat. Ser. 10.

fore says St. Austin very excellently to this purpose, *Magnus esse vis, a minimo incipe. Cogitas magnam Fabricam construere celsitudinis, de Fundamento prius cogita Humilitatis. Et quantum quisq; vult & disponit super imponere molem edificii, quanto erit majus edificium, tanto altius fodit Fundamentum. Et Fabrica quidem cum construitur in superna consurgit. Qui autem fodit Fundamentum, ad ima deprimitur. Ergo & Fabrica ante celsitudinem humiliatur, & fastigium post Humiliationem erigitur.* Would you be great, begin with being little. Do you think to Build a Fabric of great Height, first think of the Foundation of Humility, And as much weight of Building any one designs and contrives to have upwards, and by
how

A Treatise concerning Humility. 201

how much the greater the Building will be, so much the deeper he lays the Foundation. And the Fabric indeed when it is Built, rises up high; but he that digs the Foundation, works low. And therefore even the Fabric is humbled before it is raised, and the top of it is raised after it was humbled, To the like purpose again, and very handsomely, says he, *Arbo- rem attendite, petit ima prius, ut sursum excre scat. Figit radicem in humili, ut verticem tendat ad Cælum. Nunquid nititur nisi ab Humilitate? Tu autem sine Humilitate vis excelsa comprehendere: Sine Radice arboras petis. Ruina est ista, non incrementum. Observe a Tree, how it first tends downwards, that it may shoot forth upwards. It fastens its root low into the ground, that it may send up its top towards Heaven. Is it not from Humility that it endeavours to rise? But you without Humility would attain to high things. You are for growing up into the Air without a Root. But this is not Growth, but Ruin. But then if Humility be the same to Goodness and Vertue that the Foundation is to the Building, and that the Root is to the Tree, according to this double comparison of St. Austin, there needs nothing more to convince us of its necessity as to this Part, or how necessary it is (to apply the same to Humility which the Apostle says of Charity) that we*

be

*De Verbis Domini. In
Evan. Secundum Joan.
Serm. 38.*

202 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

be also *rooted* and *grounded* in it. And so I proceed to the other part of its necessity, *viz.* to observe,

17. Secondly, That Humility is also necessary to *Happiness*. First, to the Happiness of this present Life. And that both Private and Public. It is necessary to make a Man serene and easie within himself, that Repose and Tranquility of Mind which was before shewn to be the effect of Humility, being also impossible to be obtain'd without it, since there is no rest in Pride, as was before also shewn. And then again it is as necessary to make Men easie, agreeable, acceptable, and comfortable to one another, wherein the Happiness of Society, and the Pleasure of Conversation does consist. Men must converse, and must maintain some Social Correspondence with each other, as not being able to suffice for themselves in the supply of their wants, and that's their *Infirmity* and their *Necessity*. But to do this pleasantly and agreeably, with their ease, and to their content and satisfaction, that's their *Happiness*. But now there is no doing this without Civility, nor no being Civil without being Humble, or at least without acting the *part* of Humility. But *that*, besides the Hypocrisy of it, is such an uncertain, inconstant and uneven thing that there is no trusting to it, or depending upon it. For he that will (to serve

A Treatise concerning Humility. 203

a turn) act that part towards one Man, will not think himself concern'd to do the same towards another, and he that will act it at one time, will either not mind, or not care to do it at another. For a Man can't be always upon the force, the Actor will sometimes tire, and the Vizard will ever now and then drop. There is nothing like acting from a *Principle*. And therefore I think I may be allowed to say, that there is no being truly, universally, constantly, and uniformly Civil without *Humility*.

18. But then this alone serves to shew the necessity of Humility to the common Happiness. For I take Civility to be so indispensably necessary to Society, that there is no tolerable living in the World without it. Indeed a great deal of that which is called by that splendid Name (by the Master of the Ceremonies good leave) I think might be spared, without any real detriment to the interest of Human Life. But as for true, natural, substantial Civility, that mutual *Cession* to, and Preference of one another which we were before speaking of, *that* is absolutely necessary, as serving not only to adorn Conversation, but to make a Comfort and a Blessing of it. Which it would be so far from being without this Civility, that it would be hardly possible to be indured, and a Man were much better be alone by himself (if he could

204 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

could but have his Necessities supplied) in some vast unknown Solitude, than to live and converse in the World upon those terms. For indeed a state of Incivility is next to a state of War, and though Laws and Governments would in this Case (which is the advantage it has above the other) be some protection and security to a Man's *Life*, yet what would be the Pleasure or the Comfort of it if Men were continually crossing, affronting, disobliging, and putting Indignities upon one another, as it would be if this Civility were secluded. Certainly a Man were then much better be out of the World than in it. And therefore if Civility be so necessary to the common Happiness, Humility that is so necessary to Civility must be so too.

19. But if by the common Happiness be understood that which is of a more *Political* Consideration, that which concerns the Peace and Prosperity of States and Kingdoms, and the good Order of Government, it is to be considered that Humility is every whit as necessary to this, as it is to the pleasure and satisfaction of private Conversation. For 'tis Humility that keeps Men within their Bounds and Districts, makes them contented with their Stations and Assignments, though they be low, so that the Foot does not affect to be the Hand, nor the Ear to be the Eye ; the result of which is Peace, Order, and

A Treatise concerning Humility. 205

and Harmony. But now without Humility every one would be every thing, and Men would be always striving and contending for Precedency, aspiring towards the highest places, and pressing who should be foremost, and would be so far from that of *in honour preferring one another*, that they would be all for Preferring, Advancing, and Exalting themselves; the necessary consequence of which would be certain Confusion and Disorder. Especially considering that to accomplish this Self-advancement, they would not matter what Commotions and Disturbances they raised in the State, or what Schisms and Divisions they made in the Church, either or both which would not be thought too expensive a Sacrifice to be offer'd at the Altar of Pride or Ambition. And indeed if we consult experience and matter of Fact, either the History of former times, or the Observation of our own, we shall find that 'tis Pride and Ambition that makes Men Seditious and Schismatical, bad Governours and worse Subjects, discontented with their own Condition, and envious at other Men's, Troublesome, Pragmatical, and Contentious, *and where envying and strife is, there, as the Apostle says, is confusion and every evil work, James 3. 16.* For the prevention of which, and consequently for the Happiness of the Public, which cannot consist with it, Humility again is very necessary.

206 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

20. I shall add here this further Consideration to shew the necessity of Humility, which is that the very state of the World, and the present temper of Human Nature make it a very necessary Vertue. For the Passions of Men are so inordinate, and the disorder of those Passions puts them upon so many absurd, displeasing and provoking Actions, and besides Men are oftentimes so unreasonable in their Humours, and so offensive in every part of their Behaviour, justly and generally Offensive, besides that Offensiveness which may arise from the peculiar disagreement of their humour with ours, that there will never be wanting a continual occasion for the exercise of Humility. Without which and its Sister Vertue *Meekness*, there will be no living in the World with any tolerable ease or quiet. This indeed is a reason that will cease hereafter when Human Nature shall be restored to its due Order and Perfection, but in this present corrupt state of it there is but too much force in it. And indeed, setting all our other Passions and Disorders aside, that one Vice of *Pride* which so abounds in the World, is enough to render Humility a very necessary qualification for all that live in it. For there is nothing so insupportably provoking and offensive as the Pride of some Men, even when it terminates in themselves, and goes no further than the
vanity

A Treatise concerning Humility. 207

vanity of their own Behaviour and Discourse, in bragging of their Quality, or if they have none of their own to brag of, in having always in their Mouths the great quality of those whose Company they have the honour to keep. But much more when it breaks out (as it oftentimes does) into rudeness and contempt of others, and a supercilious, if not affronting treatment of those who by all the measures of real worth are much *their* Betters, if not in that very thing upon which they so value themselves. This certainly is a very trying provocation. So that there is a great necessity of Humility, if 'twere only to bear *other Mens Pride*.

21. Nor is Humility only necessary to the Happiness of this present Life, but also to the Happiness of that which is to come, whereof it is a very natural Qualification. That 'tis a necessary temper for Heaven we may fairly conclude, because the Angels for want of it could not stay there, as also that what expell'd them from thence, will be a sufficient Bar to hinder us from ever coming thither. But besides this it may be also considered from the nature of the thing, that without Humility Men would be apt to think their Reward not so much beyond their Desert, as to be either sensible enough of the greatness of their Happiness, or thankful enough to God for it. For what great
room

208 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

room is there for Gratitude where Men are full of themselves, and conceited of their own worth. And so that sweet, pleasant, and joyful part of Heaven, which consists in *Praises* and *Thanksgivings*, will be very much damp'd and allay'd, for Pride is no friend to *Allelujabs*, as well as it loves *Praise*, and a Proud Spirit can never Praise God heartily and with a sensible Devotion, as not having a due sense of the greatness of his Favours, or how little he deserves them. Besides that he loves Praise and Glory too well himself, to think it any great Felicity to give it to another, and so taking no great pleasure in that Angelical Exercise, will bear but a very untunable part in the Consort of Heaven.

22. In which there is also another thing which will afford no very agreeable entertainment to a Proud Spirit, and that is the *degrees* of *Glory*, unless he could be seated himself in one of the highest of them. That perhaps might please him, but to see so many Crowns of Glory out-shine and eclipse his, to see so many meaner Heads wear brighter and more massy Crowns, to see not only Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles, Martyrs and Confessors, Kings and Princes, and other great Men of the Earth, but the Poor of the World, People of the meanest and lowest Rank, Order and Quality, a despised Beggar,

an

A Treatise concerning Humility. 209

an innocent Child, an illiterate Rustic, or even a poor ignorant Old Woman prefer'd before him, and plac'd above him, and himself to be it may be the least, or one of the least, in the Kingdom of God ; this must needs be a thing of a grating and mortifying Consideration to a Person of a Proud, Haughty, and Aspiring Temper, and such as must fill him with Envy and Discontent. Such Passions indeed cannot be in Heaven, or consist with it, but so it would be if Pride were there. For that can indure nothing above it self, and if that *Luciferian* Spirit should again prevail, there would be Envy, Emulation, and Dissatisfaction, if not *War* again in Heaven. For sure that Pride which put *Lucifer* upon the Extravagance of Aspiring to be like the most High, would not fail to put Creatures upon vying with each other in the Ambitious Contests for Greatness and Glory. Pride therefore is not a fit Temper for Heaven, nor can those that have it be ever Happy there. And therefore 'tis necessary that the Inhabitants of that Blessed Place should all be of a contrary Spirit, and that among the many other Excellent things that are spoken of the City of God, *Humility* should be one.

23. Humility then is a necessary Qualification for Heaven, and if we mean to go thither we must take it with us, not only for

210 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

a Companion in our Journey, like some of those Ministerial Vertues, as *Faith* and *Hope*, the Vertues of *Travellers*, which conduct us on in our way towards Heaven, bring us to the very Gate, and then take leave of us without entring in, but as an inherent, indwelling, and abiding Habit or Principle, that is to go in with us, and for ever to stay and remain with us, like that *Charity* which never fails. And since Humility is a Temper so necessary for Heaven, we cannot reasonably doubt but that it is there, where besides that powerful Remedy against Pride the Vision of God, and the intimate sense of their dependance upon that fountain of Being, the Spirits of Just Men made perfect, shall also have such a just and full knowledge of themselves (to say nothing of the Consideration of their former Sins, whereof they shall still retain an Humbling, though not an Afflicting Memory) as shall not fail to shut out all Pride and Arrogance, and to keep them Low and Humble amidst the highest Elevations of their Greatness or Happiness. For all Pride is from Weakness and Infirmary, and littleness of Mind; and the Wiser Men grow, and the more truly Great and Perfect they are, the more Humble they will always be. And Human Nature being then at the top of its Perfection, will fall lowest in the depressions of Humility, which then as our
other

A Treatise concerning Humility. 211

other Graces will receive its last finishings and full accomplishment. Then there will be a thorough Annihilation of our selves before God, in the light of whose Presence we shall see what we are, and what he is, that he is *All*, and that we are *Nothing*, and so there will be no self Attribution or vain Aspiring, but all that Praise and Glory which we now Sacrilegiously take to our selves shall be then given to God, and acknowledged as his Peculiar and Incommunicable Right. Then shall the Rivers return again to the great Sea of all Perfection from whence they came, and every one that Glories then, shall truly Glory in the Lord.

24. And I must add that never will Humility appear to such Advantage, and shine so brightly as then. To see Men Humble now in the midst of the most Humbling Circumstances, now they are like *Job* upon the *Dunghil*, with their Sins and their Infirmities about them, is but what one would expect from the condition they are in, and so what one cannot so very much admire at. But to see them Low when advanced to such a Height, poor in Spirit when possess'd of the incorruptible Riches, Humble in the greatest Exaltations of Knowledge, Goodness, and Happiness, with their Crowns of Glory upon their Heads, and the Palms of Victory in their Hands — To see an empty fluttering

212 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Fop Priding himself in a fine Suit of Cloaths, or to see a vain Young Lady admiring that *better* part of her self, her *Dress*, while at the same time one considers a Glorified Saint Humble with a Resurrection Body, and when Cloath'd upon with Life and Immortality, what two strange Scenes are these, one of Pride, and the other of Humility. For as Pride is never so odious and misbecoming as *now*, so Humility will never shine with such Beauty and Amiableness as *then*. She will then be placed upon her Throne, appear with her full Grace and Lustre, and be one of the Brightest Jewels of our Immortal Crown But no description will reach this, let us *prepare*, and we shall *see*.

25. In the mean while I further consider that since Humility is so reasonable, so excellent, and so necessary a Vertue as we have shewn it to be in these three last Chapters, we have no reason to think it at all strange, that God Almighty who suits his Laws to the Reasons and Natures of things, whose *Law is Holy*, and whose *Commandment is Holy, Just, and Good*, Rom. 7. 12. and whose Service accordingly is a reasonable Service, should require it of us, and lay it upon us as a strict and positive Duty. The wonder would be if he should not. The same Consideration will also serve to render it accountable why our Saviour Christ when upon Earth, though
he

A Treatise concerning Humility. 213

he came to give us a perfect Example of Holiness, as well as to impart to us a full Revelation of the Divine Will, a perfect Rule of Life, should yet when he proposed himself to us as a Pattern for our imitation, single out this particular Vertue of Humility; this with its Twin-Sister Meekness (which accordingly St. Bernard *De Beata Maria. Sermo.* calls *Collataneæ*) recommending himself as chiefly remarkable for these Vertues, and these Vertues as of the most eminent Lustre and Importance to be learnt of any in him, calling them also by the name of his *Yoke*, as if they were the Sum and Substance of his Service and Institution, as if he had nothing else to teach, nor we any thing else to learn.

26. But so it was. When the Incarnate Wisdom of God opened his School upon Earth, what was it that this great Professor Taught? Wherein did he pretend to Instruct us, when he said, *Learn of me*? Was it in the Arts and Sciences, in the Secrets of Nature, or in the Abstrusities of Algebra, or was it to do Miracles, to make Worlds, or to raise the Dead? No, 'twas only to be Meek and Lowly in Heart. Which may well seem strange to the Curiosity of a Carnal Mind. And therefore says St. *Austin* very Rhetorically, *Hucine redacti sunt omnes Thesauri Sapientie* *De Sancta Virginitate. Cap. 35.*

214 A Treatise concerning Humility.

tia & Scientiæ absconditi in te, ut hoc pro magno discamus a te, quoniam mitis es & humilis Corde? Itane magnum est esse parvum, ut nisi a te qui tam magnus es fieret, disci omnino non posset? Are all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge which are hid in thee reduced to this, that we should learn this of thee for some great thing, that thou art Meek and Lowly in Heart? Is it so great a thing to be little, that unless it were done by thee who art so great, it could not possibly be learnt? Yes, it is so great a thing, if Goodness or Happiness are great things, since as we have shewn there is no being Good or Happy without it. And therefore St. Austin's Answer to his own Question is, Ita plane. Non enim aliter invenitur requies animæ, nisi inquieto tumore digesto, quo magna sibi erat, quando tibi sana non erat. So it is indeed. For the Soul cannot otherwise be at rest, but by the digesting of that unquiet swelling whereby she was great to her self, when she was not sound to thee.

27. St. Austin lays the stress of his Answer upon the necessity of the thing, implying that to be the reason why this was thought to be a Lesson of that Importance. And indeed, however the Men of Wit and Spirit, as they are call'd, (a Character wherein Pride commonly is the chief Ingredient) may despise and overlook Humble Men, and even Humility it self, the Excellency and Necessity
of

A Treatise concerning Humility. 215

of it was so great, that the Son of God thought it worth his while to come down from Heaven, to put on Human Nature, to live the meanest and most abject Life, and to suffer the most infamous and opprobrious Death, on purpose to teach and recommend it to the World. For as Mankind fell by Pride, so it was to be restored by Humility, whereof the Son of God was the greatest Instance, and his Incarnation and Passion the profoundest and most amazing Mystery that ever was, or could be in Nature. Such as the Angels desire to look into, and such as we, for whose sakes this great and astonishing Miracle was transacted, can never sufficiently admire for its Strangeness, or adore for its condescending Goodness. But then if the Son of God thought Humility necessary enough for *him* to teach, ought not we to think it a Lesson necessary for *us* to Learn, especially of such a Master, and after such an Example? And is it not a shame for Man to be found in Pride and Vanity, after that the Son of God has appear'd thus Cloath'd with Humility? Yes certainly, if nothing else can conquer our Pride, yet methinks there is no answering this Argument against it. Here *In Psalm 18.*
we must submit, and say with

St. Austin, Jam tandem erubescat homo esse superbus, propter quem factus est humilis Deus.

216 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Now at length let Man blush to be Proud, for whom God is become Humble.

28. That indeed is a strong and perswasive Reason why we should be so. But the inward necessity of the thing is a Reason even of that Reason. For had not Humility been so necessary in its own Nature, the Son of God needed not to have Humbled himself so far to give us a Specimen and Example of it. His assuming our Nature indeed was necessary upon another account, that he might suffer in it, and be a Sacrifice for our Sins, but he needed not to have taken it in the most vile and degrading Circumstances, nor have appear'd so meanly in the World, nor have submitted to so many low degrees of Humiliation were it not to confound our Pride, to trample upon our Vanity, and to teach us true Humility, which he needed not have done neither, if it had not been a Lesson very necessary for us to Learn.

*In Conversione S.
Pauli. Serm. 2.*

And to this agrees that of St. Bernard, *Parvulus exhibetur, ut seipsum faciat gratum & efficax necessarii parvitatæ exemplum.* He appeared little in the World, that he might make himself an agreeable and an affectual Example of necessary Littleness.

29. It is indeed a necessary Littleness, necessary to make us fit to travel in the narrow way,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 217

way, and to pass through the strait gate. And therefore says our Saviour Christ, *Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Mat. 18. 3.* We must it seems be Little, that we may be Great. We must be Children as much in Innocence, Simplicity and Humility, as we generally are in Levity, love of Trifles, and adherence to sensible Objects, or else the Kingdom of Heaven, which as our Saviour tells us consists of *such*, will not receive us. Every one almost wishes and endeavours to be somewhat more than he is, and to be as great as is possible; but this is not the way of the Kingdom, tho' it be the way of the World. We must empty, extenuate, and contract our selves, or else the strait gate will be too narrow for us, through which there is no passing if we are bloated and blown up with the swellings of Pride. And therefore says St. Austin, *Nullus cum hoc tumore per angustam Portam ejus ingreditur.* No body with this swelling goes in at his narrow Gate.

*De Animæ & ejus
Origine. Lib. 4.
Cap. 12.*

30. There is therefore a plain necessity of Humility. And since it is so very excellent and necessary a Vertue, I cannot but further reflect, and that with some sorrow and concern, upon two things. First, That Men have

218 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

generally so little sense of this matter, either as to the necessity of the thing it self, or as to their own want of it, and defectiveness in it. Secondly, That a Vertue which is so many ways excellent, so many ways useful and serviceable to the good of Mankind, so essential and fundamental a part of Christianity, and that is so absolutely necessary to Salvation it self, should be so very rare and exceeding hard to be found as it is. The World is almost all Pride, and as much as it abounds with Religion, and even rings with the noise of it, Humility can hardly find a place in it. Indeed it is a sad and melancholy Consideration, that so very few Christians should learn of Christ that very Lesson which he professedly teaches, and which is so necessary to be learnt, the Lesson of *Humility*. This I say is a sad Consideration, but the best use we can make of it, is to prize and value this excellent Vertue the more wherever we find it, to pray God to give it to those that want it, and to increase and confirm it in those that have it. That so Humility may be no longer such a singularity as to be put out of countenance by Pride.

But then in the Third Place, since Humility is so very necessary as we have shewn it to be, this calls upon us to apply our selves to the Study and to the Practice of it with a
Di-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 219

Diligence answerable to its great Importance. It is it seems of the very same concernment to be Humble as it is to be Good or Happy, since there is neither Goodness nor Happiness to be had without it. And therefore as we would be either or both of these, let us give all diligence to exercise our selves in this necessary Study, this most important Practice, the study and practice of Humility, always forming, disciplining, and training our selves up to it, and endeavouring to grow more and more perfect in it, till we can sincerely say with the *Psalmist*,

Lord I am not high minded, I have no great or high thoughts of my self, or of my own personal Worth or Excellency. I do not take my self to be some great one, either as to the advantages of my Body, or the gifts of my Mind, or as to the circumstances of my condition in the World. I know that I depend upon thee my God for whatever I am or have, and that of my self I am a pure Nothing, and so cannot justly Glory, except I Glory in thee. Nor am I *high-minded* as minding high or great things, as ambitious of Honours and Preferments, aspiring and reaching after Power or Dignity, or affecting any Worldly State or Grandeur.

I have no proud Looks. I do not affect a haughty Carriage or Deportment, nor put on

220 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

a lofty supercilious Ayre, a stately and disdainful Countenance (the natural indication of a Proud Heart) nor endeavour to look big and great, or outlook others by a confident assurance. I do not look upon my self with Admiration, nor upon others with Contempt.

I do not exercise my self in great matters which are too high for me. I am not forward to appear in great Undertakings, or to be concern'd in great Charges and Employments, leaving them to those who are fitter for them, and can better discharge them, being more willing to follow than to lead, to obey than to govern. Nor am I for meddling with things that are besides my Place and Calling, or that are beyond the Sphere of my Abilities. Whereof the mean sense that I have of my self, perswades me there are a great many.

But I refrain my Soul, and keep it low, like as a Child that is weaned from his Mother. I check and controul all Arrogant, Ambitious, and Aspiring Thoughts, mortify all motions of Vanity, and suffer not my Soul to run out into any Excesses of Self-complacency, but keep it low and quiet, in all Self-denyal and Poverty of Spirit, as a Child that is wean'd from the Breast, and has no impatient longings or cravings after it.

A Treatise concerning Humility. 221

Tea my Soul is even as a weaned Child. Denied so long the enjoyment of vain Objects till it ceases to find the want of them, or to crave for them. Quite taken off and *wean'd* from the vain Pomp and Glory of the World, perfectly deaden'd to all the reliſhes of it, and no more deſirous of any Worldly Grandeur, than a *wean'd* Child is of its old delight, the *Breaſt*, which is now become an indifferent thing to it, forgotten and deſpiſed.

A great Character, but where ſhall we find any that answer it. Men are ſo far from being *Wean'd* from the World, that they greedily *suck of the Breasts of her Consolation*, and can't bear the want of it without Peeviſhneſs, Forwardneſs and Diſcontent. They admire its vain Pomp and Glory, court its Honours and Preferments, venture even Life it ſelf to get them; and their great Ambition is who ſhall be Greateſt, and their Felicity to be as Great as the World can make them. But in all this Ambitious contention for Greatneſs, this paſſionate purſuit of Vanity, what is become of the *Weaned Child*? We ſhall find but few ſuch abroad in the World, let us pray and endeavour that we may find him at home.

31. From what has been ſaid in theſe Three laſt Chapters concerning the Reaſonableneſs, the Excellency, and neceſſity of Humility, it

now

222 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

now fully appears what a great Christian Vertue, and what a Fundamental part of Christianity, Humility is. And therefore I shall conclude this Consideration with a very remarkable Passage of St. *Austin*, which perhaps before might have been thought a Rhetorical flourish, but now may well be admitted as a sober and well-grounded Truth. 'Tis where he applies that to Humility which was said by *Demosthenes* concerning *Pronunciation*, implying that to be all in all in Religion, as this was by the Orator supposed to be in

*De Curvis Questio-
nibus. Epist. 56.*

Rhetoric. *Itaq; sicut Rhetor ille nobilissimus, cum interrogatus esset quid ei primum videretur in Eloquentiæ præceptis observari oportere, Pronunciationem dicitur respondisse. Cum quæreretur quid secundo, eandem Pronunciationem. Quid tertio, nihil aliud quàm Pronunciationem dixisse: Si interrogares, & quoties interrogares de præceptis Christianæ Religionis, nihil me aliud respondere quam Humilitatem liberet.* And therefore as that excellent Orator, when he was ask'd what he thought was the first thing to be observ'd in the Precepts of Eloquence, is said to have answer'd *Pronunciation*. And when he was ask'd what in the second place, the same *Pronunciation*. And when what in the third place, to have said nothing else but *Pronunciation*. So if you should

A Treatise concerning Humility. 223

should ask me, and as often as you should ask me concerning the Precepts of the Christian Religion, I should answer nothing else but *Humility*. Or as he expresses it a little before, in the first place *Humility*, in the second place *Humility*, and in the third place *Humility*, and as often as you should ask me I should say the same. Not but that as he says there are other Vertues, but unless Humility does precede, accompany and follow all the good which we do, all that we do is good for nothing. *Totum extorquet de manu superbia, Pride wrests it all out of our hands.* Humility therefore is absolutely necessary, if 'twere only that we might not corrupt the Excellency, and lose the reward of our other Vertues. And therefore let not any Man think himself a Christian without it. 'Tis plain that he neither is, nor can be. For as no one is to be reckon'd for a Christian that has not *Learn'd Christ*, so I do not see how a Man can be said to have learn'd Christ that has not learn'd that Lesson which Christ our Master so professedly, and so peculiarly teaches. Besides, that to make us to be Christians indeed, 'tis necessary we should communicate with Christ in his Temper and Disposition, that we should live and walk in his Spirit, and have the same mind in us that was in him. But now the Spirit of Jesus
Christ

224 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Christ was the Spirit of Humility, and then is Christ truly *form'd* in us, then we carry his Image and Resemblance whereby he may know us at the last Day, when our Minds are form'd to this excellent Temper, which therefore must be acknowledged as a Necessary and *Vital* part of Christianity.

C H A P.

C H A P. VI.

Of the particular Duties and Effects of Humility, with some Remarks upon the Signs of it.

1. **H**AVING already shewn what Humility is, upon what it is immediately founded, the Reasonableness of it, the Excellency of it, and the indispensable Necessity of it, I know not what in the handling of this Subject may better deserve to be next consider'd, than the particular Duties to which it obliges us, and whereby it expresses it self; to the Consideration of which accordingly I now proceed.

2. Though Humility, as was observ'd before, be a Vertue which respects our selves, and whereof we our selves are the only proper and immediate Object, yet the Effects and Expressions of it reach further than our selves. And 'tis of these Effects that we are, I suppose, to be understood when we speak of Humility towards God, Humility towards our Neighbour, and Humility towards our Selves. For indeed there can be but *one* Humility in all, and that is that which regards our selves. But then this Humility towards our selves,

Q

(the

226 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

(the sole Object of that low Opinion wherein Humility consists) will have effects out of and beyond our selves. That is I mean, it will make us behave and comport our selves in a certain manner with relation to God, our Neighbour, and our Selves. Which Effects are also so many Duties, to which it obliges us, and which I shall therefore consider according to that Threefold Relation.

3. And first of the Duties of Humility towards God. This the Prophet expresses in general by *walking Humbly with him*. He hath shewed thee O Man what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God, Micah 6. 8. Walking here signifies our Carriage, Behaviour, or Deportment in the ordinary practice of Religion, that being the pace which Men ordinarily use when they go, or move from one place to another. And by our walking Humbly with God, we are to understand in general our walking so with him, or our comporting our selves in such a manner towards him, as may bespeak and express the low and humble sense which we have of our selves. For that is properly our Humility, the other is but the Effect of it. Our Humility consists in the low sense which we have of our *selves*, but then that low sense of our selves will oblige us to Comport our selves in a certain manner

A Treatise concerning Humility. 227

manner towards God, such a manner as may express that sense. And this is the general of what we are to understand by our walking Humbly with God. But then this more particularly includes,

4. First, Our thinking Highly, Magnificently, Honourably, and Worthily of him, both as to his Being or Essence, and as to those several Perfections and Attributes whereby, by reason of the narrowness of our Faculties, and their disproportion to so vast an Object, we are forced as it were by parts, to conceive his simple and undivided Essence. Our thinking highly of his Wisdom, highly of his Power, highly of his Goodness, &c. For though this be no more than what Religion in general obliges us to, since we cannot serve God as we ought, from a principle of Love, and with a filial Ingenuity, without having high and worthy Thoughts of him; nay, though it be no more than what even the strictness of Philosophic Truth and Science demands, since we cannot be good Philosophers without conceiving rightly of things, and according to their Natures, which *rightly* in God is *Highly*, yet this same thing also flows in a particular manner from Humility, and may be consider'd as a special Effect and Duty of it. For as 'tis the Effect of being low one's self, or in a low place, to make other things seem high, so the more

228 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Humble we are in our selves, and the lower we descend into the Abyſs of our own Nothing, the more raised and elevated thoughts we ſhall have of God, and be the more penetrated with the ſenſe of his Infinite Greatneſs and Majeſty.

5. Secondly, Our proſtrating our Souls before him by Acts of the loweſt and moſt profound Veneration, and even annihilating our ſelves in his Preſence, looking upon our ſelves as *Nothing* in compariſon of his Incomprehenſible Being, and Addreſſing him accordingly in our Religious Worſhip, not with a ſaucy Familiarity, or negligent Confidence, as if we were talking with an equal, but with that ſerious Concern and awful Reverence that ſo vaſt a Diſtance and Diſproportion requires. An inſtance whereof we have in that of the Patriarch *Abraham*, *Behold now I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord, which am but Duſt and Aſhes*, Gen. 18. 27. Such a ſenſe ſhould we have of our own Meaneſs and Vileness when we approach unto God, and put our ſelves more immediately into his Preſence. For when will we be Humble if not in our Prayers and Devotions? The Angels in Heaven *Praise* him with cover'd Faces; much more ſhould we his poor *Petitioners* on Earth, put up our Humble *Supplications* to him with the moſt regardful Concern. We ſhould therefore

fore approach him Reverently, with recollected Thoughts, silent Passions, and an all over composed posture of Soul, paying him the lowest Submission of all our Intellectual Powers and Faculties, Honouring and Magnifying him by all that is within us; thus *serving the Lord*, as *St. Paul* expresses it, *with all Humility of Mind*, *Acts* 20. 19.

6. But this is but one part of us, and therefore our walking Humbly with God further requires in the third place all *Humility of Body* too. That we put our Bodies in such lowly Postures, and use such submissive and reverential Gestures, as either by Nature or by Custom serve best to express the Humility of our Souls. True Devotion indeed requires this, but true Humility requires also the same; and 'tis much to be fear'd that he has neither the one nor the other that neglects it, or can dispense with it. For there is no sentiment of the Mind that does so naturally communicate with the Body, as these two do, especially *Humility*. A Lowly Mind will even Naturally, I had almost said Mechanically, put a Man into a lowly posture of Body, especially in our Religious Addresses to God. Which however some may omit either out of Laziness, or out of Indevotion, or upon a pretence of a more Spiritual Worship, yet that any should *scruple* it, and that in the most Sacred Office of our Religion,

Q 3

230 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

ligion, seems very strange, to say no worse of it. But the Humility of Heaven differs a little from that of Earth. There the *Angels* while they Sing Anthems and Allelujahs cover their Faces, but here *Men* will not bend their Knees.

7. Another Duty of Humility towards God, or another part of our walking Humbly with him is, Fourthly, with all readiness and submission to receive the Manifestations of his Mind or Will, whether *Doctrinal* or *Preceptive*, and not to dispute what he reveals, when once satisfied that he has reveal'd it. Till then indeed we may, and then is the proper time for the use of our Reason, and the exercise of our Judicial Discernment, though even then 'tis no just Objection to the truth of a thing, nor consequently to the revelation of it, that we do not comprehend it, and that because our Understanding is not the measure of Truth, and so a thing may be true notwithstanding our Incapacity to understand *how*. But indeed if it plainly and evidently appears that the thing is not only above, but contrary to Reason, something that absolutely cannot be, an Impossibility, a Contradiction, then indeed we may warrantably deny our assent not only to the thing pretended to be reveal'd, but also to the truth of the Revelation it self, it being impossible that any such thing should be reveal'd

A Treatise concerning Humility. 231

veal'd by God. Now though whether the thing be so or no, belongs to our reason to consider, as also whether upon other accounts (for the bare negation of Impossibility is not enough to conclude a thing true, though the Position of it be enough to conclude it false) it be reasonable to admit the Revelation, yet after that it appears plain to us that such a thing is reveal'd, our Reason then has nothing further to discuss or argue, but is to resign the Chair to Faith, to the obedience of which our understanding is then to be Captivated, and we are no longer to dispute, but humbly to believe, and that tho' we do not comprehend the nature or manner of the thing proposed to our Belief. For which the Divine Authority is a sufficient reason; the humble Sense we have of our selves, and the high Thoughts we have of God, both concurring to make it reasonable to suppose that a great many things Reveal'd by him may be true, which our infirm and narrow Faculties cannot comprehend. So that such a Belief of things above reason, is yet according to reason.

8. We do not therefore exclude the use of reason from Religion, in which according to this account it has a double place. First, In the discussion of the truth of the *Revelation*, whether such a thing be reveal'd or no, which is to be examin'd in a rational

232 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

way by its proper Arguments. Secondly, In our having a reason why we believe the Article it self when we *do* believe it. Which reason though it be not from the nature of the thing it self, but from the Authority of the Revealer, is yet a sufficient reason for a firm Assent, since that Authority is supposed to be Infallible. Faith indeed and Reason being so commonly opposed, Men are apt to run into Confusion and Mistake here. But the truth is, though Faith and Reason, or to speak more clearly, though that Assent which we give upon a rational Evidence, and that Assent which we give upon Authority are two distinct things, and may in some respect be opposed to each other, yet Faith is not truly opposed to Reason as Reason, or to all Reason (since Faith is a rational Act, and he that believes must have a reason why he believes, or else he believes like a Fool) but only to the *Internal* Reason or Evidence of the thing, which either is none, or not consider'd at least, or regarded by him that believes. But still, though Faith does not proceed upon the reason of the thing, yet it has a proper reason of its own, *viz.* the *Authority* of the Revealer. And that Reason or Motive of Faith may and must be competently clear, however the Object of it may be obscure. Reason therefore I say is not hereby excluded from Religion,
only

A Treatise concerning Humility. 233

only Humility requires that we should so far submit our understandings to God, as to be ready to believe whatever he reveals, though what he does so should be found to transcend the comprehension of our reason. And in this we act Reasonably, as well as Humbly. And this is truly to receive with *Meekness* the ingrafted word, as St. *James* expresses it, *James* 1. 21.

9. But besides the *Doctrinal* part of the Divine Revelation, which is the Object of *Faith*, there is also the *Preceptive* part, which is the Object of our Love and *Obedience*. I mean God's Laws and Commandments, those Rules of Life and Manners, which he has given us, and required us under the penalty of his Displeasure to observe. Now Christian Humility obliges and requires us not to think any of these to be grievous, not to complain of them as hard or heavy Impositions, much less to think our selves too great or too good to be commanded or directed by one who is so infinitely above us, but to acknowledge God's Commandments to be just and reasonable, to submit our selves chearfully to his Authority in imposing them on us, and to yield them a ready and hearty Compliance and Obedience, serving him with Reverence and a Godly Fear, and even *trembling at his word*, according to that Character of an Humble Person given by the Prophet, *Isa.* 66.
And

234 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

And when we have done all this, to be so far from glorying in our good works, or thinking we can *merit* any thing from God by our Obedience to his Laws, or any Service we can pay him, as after all to own our selves to be *unprofitable Servants*. To which I also add, that as we are not to glory our selves, so all that Glory which we receive from others for any of our Vertues, 'tis the Duty of Humility to return to God, to whom only it justly belongs.

10. I shall mention but one more Duty of Humility towards God, (for I am not considering our Duty towards God at large, but only so much of it as flows from Humility) and that consists in Submission too, but it is to the *Providential* Will of God, that is to the Will of God as declared to us by the events of things, which being under the Superintendency, Direction, and Wise Disposal of God, as he is Governour of the World, are to be look'd upon by us as Significations of his Will and Pleasure, and submitted to accordingly. Not that God is to be supposed to have fix'd and predetermin'd every thing that comes to pass by an Absolute Decree (for some of those things are *Sins*) but that his Will is some way or other concern'd in them, either as permitting, or as ordering, disposing, directing, over-ruling, so that nothing comes to pass absolutely
without

A Treatise concerning Humility. 235

without him, as our Saviour says concerning the Sparrows, that not one of them falls to the ground *without* your Father, *Mat.* 10. 29. Now to these Dispensations of God's Providence, Humility obliges us to submit, which indeed is no more than to be content that God's Will be done, and not ours ; which sure a Wise Man or an Humble Man can never dispute. No, he leaves the World to God's Government in the worst of Times, and in the worst of Conditions, and is well satisfied with all the measures that he takes, *as trusting in the Lord with all his heart, and not leaning to his own understanding, Prov.* 3. 5. Some Providences indeed are very Dark and Mysterious, as indeed it would be strange if they should not, since 'tis God that Governs the World, whose Ways are not as our Ways, nor his Thoughts as our Thoughts. There may well therefore be *Misteries* in *Providence* as well as in *Faith*, but then the same Humility that obliges us to *believe* the one, tho' above our Comprehension, obliges us also to *submit* to the other, and that for the very same reason. This is therefore another Duty of Humility to acquiesce in the disposals of God's Will, and to submit to the dispensations of his Providence, though we do not understand them, though we cannot answer Objections against them, though we know not how to reconcile the seeming Inconsistencies

236 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

cies that are in them, nay, though they are never so painful and afflicting to us. For we know *who* 'tis that strikes us, though we may not know for *what*. And that Humility will think reason enough why we should be dumb, and not open our Mouths in any language of complaint or discontent, but rather Humble our selves yet further under the Mighty Hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time.

II. But here among the dispensations of Providence, I shall take particular notice of one very common one, which as 'tis our Duty to submit to, so Humility will teach and dispose us to practice it. And that is *Poverty*. Which though a state not so naturally desirable, yet as some wise Persons upon Considerations either Philosophical or Pious have chosen it, so the truly Humble Christian will quietly, contentedly, and chearfully submit to it. There are two things to be considered in Poverty. There is the *Hardship* of it, and there is the *Disgrace* of it. The Hardship of it is not an imaginary, but a real and a sensible thing. And there is a great deal of it in Poverty. Not only in such a degree of it as implies the want of *Necessaries* (that's Hardship indeed) but even where there is a great want of *Conveniencies*. Meaning by Conveniencies, not what every nice, humourfome, self-indulging fancy shall account

A Treatise concerning Humility. 237

count for such (for then there will be hardly any thing but what may be pretended to be a conveniency) but such things as are really necessary, though not to the very Being and Sustainment, yet to the tolerable Comfort and Enjoyment of Life. 'Tis a great Hardship to want these Conveniencies, to be in such strait and penurious Circumstances as not to know which way to turn, or how to shift, nor to be able to afford our selves those ordinary Accommodations of Life without which there is not much comfort in it. This I say is a great Hardship, especially to such Persons as are well Born and Bred, or whose Circumstances, Character, Condition or Quality, oblige them to such a way of Living as their Ability will not suffice to maintain. This strains the hard knot of Poverty yet harder, and makes it pinch more sensibly. Besides, that the very same Condition will be Poverty to such Persons, which to others of an inferiour rank will not be so, but perhaps a state of Plenty and Abundance. For these have but few Occasions, can live in a private way within themselves, and have little else to provide for but to supply their own natural Necessities. So that a little here will go a great way. Whereas the other, besides the supply of their own real and personal wants, are concern'd also to maintain a *Decency*, which is a peculiar charge upon them, and

138 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

and such as will reduce a Competency, nay sometimes what would otherwise be a Plenty, to a straitness. And such as is the more pitiable, because generally so little consider'd. Nor will the common answer serve here, that they that have little must live *accordingly*. This is sooner advised than practiced as the Case is now supposed. Mean and private People indeed who have to themselves that little which they have, to dispose of it as they please, may do this. But where there is Quality, or a public Station or Character, there is not that Liberty to order ones way of Living as one pleases, because Credit and Decency are to be regarded as well as mere natural Necessity, which as it is a real Charge and Burthen, so unless there be an answerable provision for it, must needs involve those that are under it in such straits and difficulties as the *common poor* know nothing of, and so seldom or never think of. But those who have experience of this, know it to be a great Hardship. But yet however the good and truly Humble Christian will contentedly submit to this, as well as to all the other Hardships of Poverty. Not only as thinking himself unworthy of a better State, being ready to say with the Humble Patriarch, I am not worthy of the least of all thy Mercies, but also as acquiescing in the Assignment and Allotment of him who governs the
World,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 239

World, in whose hands are Wealth and Poverty, and who best knows which of them is upon the whole best for *him*.

Then as for the *disgrace* of Poverty, though I know no real disgrace that is in it, nor consequently, why any wise Man should be ashamed of being Poor, if it be not from some fault or miscarriage of his that he is so; yet since the humour of the World is pleased to fix a Character of Disgrace upon it, this gives a further occasion for the exercise of Christian Humility. And he that is indued with it, will quietly and contentedly bear this Disgrace, and be easie under it, though at the same time he may be sensible, and must if he be a considering Man, how utterly senseless and against all reason such Disgrace is. But it may be reasonable to bear, what is not reasonable to impose, and accordingly the Humble Christian who has taken up the *Yoke* as well as the *Cross* of his Master, will bear the Disgrace as well as the other Hardships of Poverty, not only from the very dead sense he has of all Worldly Honour and Reputation, but also as 'tis the consequence and appendage of that State which the Providence of God has call'd him to, to which he owes and humbly pays all Resignation and Submission. But this a Proud Spirit cannot do. The Hardship and the Disgrace of Poverty are both intolerable to him,
and

240 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

and he cannot forgive the World for the one, nor hardly God for the other. Which by the way shews how necessary Humility is, that so Poverty which is so common a Case, and from which no condition is absolutely secure, may be born with Ease and Temper, when it cannot be declined.

12. And so much concerning the Duties of Humility towards God. Let us now see how it expresses it self towards our *Neighbour*, with relation to whom, the Effects and Duties of Humility I take to be such as these. Not to lessen him that we may greater our selves, but to be free and ready to acknowledge any Perfection that is in him, as also to indure to *hear* him Praised. To presume always in favour of others, and to be apt to think better of others than of our selves, as being conscious of our own Faults and Infirmities, but not of other Mens, as knowing our own inside, whereas we see only their outside; and so as considering our selves as we are in our selves, but others (unless it be here and there where their Malice *flames* out) according to those things which they have from God. And consequently to this, to prefer others before our selves. I do not mean as to our inward Thought and Judgment, for that is not always possible, but as to outward treatment and respect, *in honour preferring one another*, as the Apostle speaks,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 241

speaks, or as our Saviour expresses it by taking the *lowest Room*, Luke 14. 10. Being so far from affecting Superiority of place, or contending for Precedency (as the manner of the world now is) as to be ready to put our selves behind others, and to yield and give place to others, as far as is consistent with the order of the World, and those necessary distinctions which God has made among Men for the better Government of it. For these are also to be regarded, nor is Humility to be so understood or practiced, as to intrench upon the order of Charity, or to introduce that *Confusion* whereof God, as the Apostle says, *is not the Author*, 1 Cor. 14. 33. But as far as it will stand with this Order, Humility is for giving place, as much as Pride is for taking it. Not that I can apprehend that Humility should always oblige us positively to think others better than our selves ; nor can I suppose that our Saviour should intend that he that takes the lowest Room, should always think himself to be the very worst Man in the Company. But Humility is apt and readily disposed to think others better than it self, as not knowing for certain (generally speaking) but that they may ; and when she finds that she cannot, yet however she will give place lest she should possibly be mistaken, as knowing the worst of it self, but not the best of others, nor

R

whe-

342 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

whether they may not excel us in some hidden Vertue, though we perhaps may unquestionably excel them in all that appears. Which is reason enough, at least for an outward Preference.

13. Further, it is also the Duty, and will be the Effect of true Humility to give to every Man that deference and regard which is due to him as a *Man*, as a Creature that carries the impress of the Divine Image upon him, is partaker of a very excellent Nature, and capable of the greatest Perfection and highest Advancements in the other World, how mean soever he may be in this. Humility therefore will reverence Human Nature at least in every Man, though he should have nothing else that is valuable in him. For that is sufficient to give him a just Right and Title to our respect, which Humility will not fail conscientiously to pay, so fulfilling that Precept of the Apostle, *Honour all Men*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 17. For all Men have something Honourable in them, even the common Dignity of that Nature whereby they are Men, and therefore all Men are to be Honour'd, let their Natural Imperfections or Disadvantages as to Wit or Beauty be what they will, let their Worldly Condition be what it will, or let their Degree or Relation as to us be what it will. Still they are *Men*, and as such to be Honour'd by us. And therefore Humility

A Treatise concerning Humility. 243

mility will despise no Man for his Natural Infirmities, whether deformity of Body, or ignorance of Mind, nor for his Poverty or mean Extraction, (particularly it will not despise or overlook a poor Relation) nor for the servileness of his Condition in being our Slave or Servant. For these are all but Accidental Differences, and some of them not so great neither as the World imagines; they agree with us in the main, and we are distinguish'd from them only in Accidents, and that too not by our selves, *for who maketh thee to differ from another?* Not we certainly, who as our Saviour says cannot make one hair white or black, or add so much as one Cubit to our Stature. 'Tis not we therefore that make the Distinction, and why then should we be Proud of it? But if we did, yet still that wherein we agree is more than that wherein we differ, and so there is more reason why we should respect Men for that wherein they naturally agree with us, than despise them for that wherein they accidentally differ from us. And therefore again Humility will *Honour all Men.*

14. And if *all* Men, then much more will it think it self concern'd in another Apostolical Precept, *to render Honour to whom Honour is due; Rom. 13. 7.* That is, in an especial manner and measure due, or else the Restriction (to *whom*) would be to no purpose.

244 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

For Honour is due in a large sense to all Men, but there are some Men to whom it is more peculiarly and more eminently so, as being either in Dignity or Authority placed above us; and 'tis of these that the Apostle here speaks. Now these Humility that is so civil and respectful to every Man, will be sure to treat according to the degree or kind of their Dignity and Superiority, whether Natural, Civil, or Ecclesiastic. To express this in the Language of our Church in her excellent Catechism, it will think it its Duty, and make it its Practice, *to Honour Father and Mother, to Honour and Obey the King, and all that are put in Authority under him, to submit it self to all its Governours, Teachers, Spiritual Pastors and Masters, and to order it self lowly and reverently to all its Betters.* And so it fulfills the whole Fifth Commandment, the Commandment of Promise, of which there is no such Guardian as Humility. For who so fitly disposed to Obey and Submit himself to others, as he that thinks meanly of himself? Humility is the most respectful Inferiour, and the most obedient Subject in the World.

15. But Humility as low as it is, looks down as well as up, and has respect also to those that are placed below it. 'Tis not without concern that she reflects that there should be any such, but since the order of the
the

the World will so have it, she submits to it as to a Necessity, and is rather contented than pleased with her Superiority. This indeed is the hardest Chapter that Humility has to read. Not the condescending, but the governing and presiding part. Condescension is her Inclination, the other is at once her Office and her Burthen. And yet if she condescends too liberally, then she slackens the Reins of necessary Discipline and Government, and if on the other side she assumes too much upon her, then she is false to her own Spirit and Character. So that this is a very nice part. Pride is not more put to't to *Obey*, than Humility is to *Govern*. But however, she makes the best Governour in the World, though perhaps not altogether so good a Governour as she does a Subject, having more inclination to Obey than to Rule. But even this (though this be not her *part*) she discharges well, treating those that are under her Authority, with all that Sweetness, Courtesie, and obliging Condescension that can consist with it, and distinguishing her self from them no further than is necessary to maintain that Authority, and to answer the ends of it.

16. Now as for Inferiours at large, that are only Inferiours and not properly Subjects, over whom she has no power, but only a Pre-eminence of Degree or Quality; here

246 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Humility being more at liberty to follow the bent of her own Inclination, and knowing withal that Men are naturally equal, and distinguish'd only by Accidental Circumstances, and that neither Birth nor Riches, nor a Title, can add any real worth or perfection to the Man, is more full of Condescension and Self-Abasement, more free of its Civilities, and less mindful of its State, unless it be to hide, temper and qualify it by a more abundant Courteousness and Affability, that she may not be troublesome to any with her Greatness, nor oppress those who move in a lower Sphere with a light too strong and dazzling. She is therefore so far from affecting State, or *putting on Quality* as they call it, that she puts it off as much as she can, as an unweildy cumbersome thing, that sits not more easily upon her than *Saul's Armour* did upon *David*. She puts it off therefore, and converses freely, and lets her Greatness be troublesome to none but her self, thus *condescending to Men of low estate*, as the Apostle speaks. Which when all's done, besides the Humility of it, is better Breeding than either a stately Reserve, or a scornful and supercilious Address. For the respect that is shewn to those below us, rebounds upwards, and never are we so truly great as in this littleness. And thus does Humility behave it self towards her Inferiours. As for
Equals,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 247

Equals, she hardly knows any such degree. Superiour and Inferiour are Distinctions made by others, and she must submit to them as she finds them. But where she finds an Equal, she quickly makes a Difference, by putting her self on the lower ground. In fine, Humility is truly Civil, and makes a conscience to give to every Man that degree of respect which is due to him, and that heartily and sincerely, which is worth all the Form and Ceremony wherewith the Men of Mode very gravely and solemnly abuse one another.

17. But Humility goes beyond *Civility*, and does not think any Office or Work too low or mean whereby we may serve or do good to our Neighbour, which is also another Duty of Humility. And indeed a very necessary one; for if once Men indulge a Niceness and a Delicacy in this matter, they will be shy and backward in doing good to others, and that even when they have a disposition to it, for fear of cheapning, degrading and undervaluing themselves, and so many a Charitable work will be lost merely upon a point of Honour. And this is the great unhappiness of Pride, it does not only spoil all the good we do, but in great measure hinders us from doing it, and so is an Enemy to Charity, which therefore is with good reason observ'd by *St. Paul* not to be *puffed up*. It is an Enemy to it, not only as

R 4

'tis

248 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

'tis an expensive Vice, consuming that upon it self which might and ought to be employ'd upon works of Charity, and so disabling a Man for the doing them, but also as making him *unwilling* to do them. For many times a good Office cannot be done without submitting ones self to what, in the Language of the World, is call'd Mean and Servile, which rather than do, a Proud nice Man will let the good work alone, and when he sees the poor wounded Traveller lying in the way, will only look on him, and pass by on the other side, without applying a Plaster to his Wounds, for fear of fouling his Fingers. But Humility is the good *Samaritan* that stands upon no Punctilios where Charity is concern'd, is more concern'd to be Beneficial than to keep State, does not think her self too great to do good, and so she can but raise the half dead Stranger, cares not how low she stoops to do it. Of which Charitable Humility, or Humble Charity, we have the greatest Example in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ for the Redemption of the World.

18. Besides these Active Duties of Humility, there are one or two more of a *Passive* Nature, relating also to our Neighbour, which I shall briefly touch upon. The first of these is to be content to be meanly thought of by him. This is not Humility it self, but the *effect*

A Treatise concerning Humility. 249

effect of it, and 'tis that effect of it which is opposed, not to Pride, (for so Humility it self is) but to that contrary effect of Pride which we call *Vain-glory*. For as a Proud Man thinking highly of himself is naturally led to affect that others should have the same high Opinion of him, because he thinks he justly deserves it; so an Humble Man having low and mean thoughts of himself, is as naturally disposed to be contented that others should think meanly of him too, and so is not offended or displeased with them if they do, not only because in so thinking they think as he himself does, but also because they think that which he himself thinks to be *true*. And no contempt of that which appears contemptible can seem unreasonable.

19. The next passive Duty of Humility relating to our Neighbour, is to be ready to take an Unkindness from him, nay even an Affront or Indignity, Meekly and Patiently, without any violent Transport or Commotion of Anger. Pride is a very nice and sensible thing, and presently flies out into Passion and Resentment. But Humility, like Charity, *is not easily provoked*, does not presently take fire, but will suffer long, and much too before it be moved. Not but that an Humble Man, if he be not a Fool, must be as sensible of that which is real in an Injury or an Affront as another, so as to know when he
is

250 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

is handsomely or unhandsomely treated, but setting but a low value upon himself, he cuts off that part of the Affront which arises from the dignity of the Person to whom it is offer'd, which must needs very much qualifie and deaden the Resentment ; I do not say quite extinguish it, nor do I see any necessity of that. For the natural part of the Injury will remain after that which arises from the dignity of the Patient is taken away, and I know no reason why Humility should make a *Stoic* of the Christian, or a Block of the Man. But I say it will very much *deaden* the Resentment, to which accordingly Humility will be very slow, as also *in* it very temperate. And so *Meekness* will be the natural effect of Humility, and consequently its inseparable Companion and Attendant. And accordingly our great Lord and Master in whose Temper, Conversation, and Character, these two Vertues made so bright and so particular a Figure, thought fit to join them both together in that great Lesson which he has commended to the Study and Practice of all his Disciples, *Learn of me, for I am Meek and Lowly in Heart.* As also he does in his Beatitudes, where Humility and Meekness are again join'd together, but with this difference, that Meekness Inherits the Earth, but Humility Heaven,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 251

20. This last Duty of Humility concerns our Behaviour towards our Neighbour upon an Injury receiv'd *from* him, but there is also another Passive Duty of Humility which we are to exercise towards our Neighbour, upon an Injury or Affront offer'd *to* him, and that is, not to make him *Reparation*, for that belongs to Justice, and so falls not under the present consideration, but to submit our selves to him, to acknowledge our Fault, to beg his Pardon, and to make the first step in suing for Peace and Reconciliation. There needs indeed a great deal of Ingenuity, and a very Christian Spirit, to do this in some Cases and to some Persons, two sorts especially, either to those who are very much below us, or to such Superiours as are of an insulting and unforgiving temper, and that are like to trample upon us the more for our Submission; but however Humility will do what is fit to be done, and if she thinks her self to be in the fault, will make no scruple freely and ingenuously to own and acknowledge it. Which Consideration has also place in the *Penitentiary* Confession of our Sins before Men in Cases of Public Scandal and Offence given by them, which as 'tis always a great, so may sometimes be a necessary act of Humility.

21. But perhaps it may be thought not so necessary a one, if among the Acts and Duties

252 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

ties of Humility I should reckon the receiving of a *Kindness*. And yet I know not whether there may not be as much Humility shewn in the accepting of a Kindness, as in the bearing of an Unkindness. Pride I am sure likes neither of them. The one it cannot bear with any tolerable Patience, and the other it does not mightily care for. Partly as not willing to submit to an Obligation, partly as being loth to be thought in a releivable Condition, or at least such as *another* can make better. But now Humility does no more think her self above the *receiving* a Kindness than above the *doing* one. Which accordingly she receives, First, Chearfully, as being content to be obliged. 2. Thankfully, as thinking it no shame not to be above the Kindness of another. Which therefore she readily accepts, and perhaps does not make so much haste to quit Scores as Pride does, not that she is less grateful, but because she can well indure for a while to lie under an Obligation. And here should I reflect upon the very high Spirits of some low People who will indure to be in extream straits and wants rather than receive Relief in a public way, perhaps there might be occasion for it. Indeed 'tis a Commendable thing for a Man to endeavour to maintain himself by his own labour rather than charge the Public, but if he find he cannot, and be
really

A Treatise concerning Humility. 253

really in want, I know not why he should not accept of Relief in the way that it can be had; and if he does not, 'tis a sign he wants something else as well as that.

22. I cannot at present very easily think of any other Duty of Humility belonging to this Head, unless it be patiently and quietly to take a Reproof, or friendly Admonition, to be contented that another should find fault with us. This indeed is a tender part, and Pride will not indure to have it touch'd. And truly most People do touch it so roughly, and with such hard hands, that a Man had need have a very excellent Spirit to submit to such coarse Discipline. But yet as 'tis the Duty of Charity to give Reproof when it is needed, according to that Precept of the Law, *Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer Sin upon him, Levit. 19. 17.* So 'tis also the Duty of Humility to take it. And as a truly Charitable Man will give necessary and seasonable Reproof, though it be commonly an ungrateful Work, so a Man that is truly Humble will take it, and say with the *Psalmist*, (who also submitted himself to the Admonition of the Prophet *Nathan*) *Let the Righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness. Let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent Oyl, Psal. 141.* More healing, though not so smooth as that of Flattery.

23. And

254 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

23. And so much for the Duties of Humility towards God and our Neighbour. Let us now come nearer home, and consider those which concern our selves. To avoid confusion here we must distinguish between what Humility is, and what it obliges to. That which it obliges to, as we now consider it, is not properly to have a mean opinion of our selves. That's what Humility formally is, and wherein its nature does consist. But then this mean Opinion of our selves which is our Humility, does oblige us to some other Acts towards our selves. Which are distinct from it, but consequent to it, and so are both the Duties and natural Effects of it. For he that has an Humble sense of himself cannot but be suitably affected towards himself, and act in a manner proportionable to that Affection, as well towards himself, as towards God and his Neighbour. Perhaps towards himself in the first place, for I know not but that Humility, as well as Charity, may begin at *home*.

24. Here then Humility obliges us, and the natural effect of it will be, *not* to affect an Ayr of Melancholy, a sad Reserve, or an unnecessary Silence, a demure Face, a dejected Spirit, a down cast Look, a forlorn Countenance, or a creeping Behaviour, or a slovenly Dress, or a vile Beggary Habit, (this is not to be Cloathed with Humility, for a
Man

A Treatise concerning Humility. 255

Man may be Proud in Rags, and Humble in Purple and Scarlet) or to affect a neglect of ones self, or to live or be altogether by one's self, as if we thought our selves unworthy of the Company of others, (whereas perhaps, 'tis because we think our selves too *good* for them) or to be very much out of fashion, or to appear as ridiculous and contemptible as we can, or to refuse to receive the common Civilities of the World, or the customary Titles of Respect (such as *Sir*, or *Madam*) when given us, or in short to affect any other oddness or Singularity whatsoever, which would be a token rather of our Pride than of our Humility. Neither does Humility oblige us to be always declaiming against our selves, or proclaiming our own Faults, Follies, or Infirmities, Poverty or mean Parentage, or to be ever upon the strain of disparaging and undervaluing our selves, or complaining of our own Ignorance or Dullness, or *bad Hearts*, much less to make our selves worse than we really are, crying down our selves in all Companies for the greatest Sots, Fools, or Sinners in Nature. For sure there is a Justice due to our selves as well as to our Neighbour, and it can be no part of Humility to transgress it. But that which is the Duty and will be the effect of Humility towards our selves, is,

25. First,

256 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

25. First, Not to Magnifie our selves to our selves, by entertaining our Fancies and Imaginations with great Images or Ideas of our selves, either in an Absolute or in a Comparative way, saying to or within our selves, how much wiser am I than such a one, or how much better than such a one, or how much more do I deserve such an Honour or such a Preferment than he that has it, and how little does the World understand my Abilities, or consider my Merit. Or by making our selves the Object of our Contemplation, (I mean in the way of admiring and doting upon our selves, for to Contemplate our selves in order to the better *Knowledge* of our selves is another thing) dwelling continually upon the Consideration of our own Excellencies and Perfections, meditating upon our own worth, having our own dear selves, or something or other that relates to our selves, always in our View, and pleasing, enjoying, and as it were warming and basking our selves in the reflection of our own Light. We do not use to do so by things that we have a little Opinion of, or little Regard for, they do not use so to fill our Minds, or to ingage our Thoughts, and therefore if we do so by our selves, 'tis a Sign and an Argument that we have not a little Opinion of our selves, or fondness for our selves, and consequently that not Humility, but Pride
and

A Treatise concerning Humility. 257

and Self-love have the Dominion of our Hearts.

26. Secondly, Not to Magnifie our selves to others, by boasting or bragging of our Perfections, glorying in our Accomplishments, or so much as Praising, Applauding or Commending our selves. Not that this is so strictly to be understood as if it were against Humility for a Man to say the least good thing of himself. No, as a Man may sometimes say a bad thing of another without breach of *Charity*, so I suppose that on the other side he may also say a good thing of himself without the breach of *Humility*. As in these two general Cases. First, If the good which he says of himself does not tend much to his Praise, so that he cannot be supposed to intend his Praise by it. Secondly, If it does not terminate in it. First, If it does not make much for his Praise. Which may be either because of the slightness and inconsiderableness of the matter, the thing which I commend my self for, or in my self, being of a light moment. As suppose I should say, I can make a good Pen, or I can draw with it a strait line, or write a good legible hand, or the like. I suppose I should not be thought to offend against Humility by saying so much as that comes to of my self. Nor would it be convenient to interpret the Obligation of it so severely. Or else because
S
though

258 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

though the matter may not otherwise be slight, yet I have so great Opportunities or Advantages of arriving to a considerable excellency in it, that to excel in it is, to me at least, no such great matter, but that I may upon occasion freely speak of it without intending any Glory or Reputation to my self by it. As suppose a Professour in any Art or Science, who had for a long time applied himself to the study of it, should speak of his understanding something belonging to that Profession. As *Tully* in the beginning of his Offices does to his Son *Marcus*, when he tells him, that the reading of his Works would be a means to improve him in his *Latin* Tongue. And that though he was ready to yield to a great many in point of Philosophy, yet he thought he had a kind of right to pretend to what belong'd to an Oratour, to speak aptly, distinctly, and handsomely, because he had spent his whole Life in it. Or if in this instance, *Tully* should be thought a little too liberal in his own Character, as perhaps he may, we will suppose he had only said that he well understood the *Latin* Tongue, which certainly to him, being a Native *Roman*, had been no such great Commendation. And this is the first Case wherein a Man may speak well of himself, if the good which he says of himself does not tend much to his Praise.

A Treatise concerning Humility. 259

27. The other is Secondly, if it does not *terminate* in it. That is, if a Man does not propose his own Honour, Glory, or Reputation, as his ultimate or furthestmost end in commending or speaking well of himself, but does it only to serve some other good and laudable end, such as the Glory of God, the good of his Neighbour, or his own necessary Vindication, to which ends, his own Praise or Reputation is either purely accidental, as coming in only by the by, or else serves as a direct and proper means. In such a Case to speak well of ones self, as unbecoming as it generally is, may well consist with Christian Humility. For if a Man may let his *Light shine before Men, that they may see his good works*, that is, so do them that they may see them, provided that not their seeing them, but the Glory of God, be the true and ultimate end of it, as it there follows, *and glorify your Father which is in Heaven*, I see not why a Man may not be allowed to speak well of himself, or publish his own Gifts, Graces or Vertues, (which is but another way of turning his *Light* or bright side to the view of Men) if it be for the same good End and Purpose, *viz.* that God and not himself may be Glorified. And accordingly St. Paul not only commends himself, but even enlarges upon his own Commendation in the 11th and 12th of his Second Epistle to the *Corinthians*,

§ 2

260 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

thians, being compell'd to it as he there tells them. And *St. Cyprian* in the like Necessity and for his own Vindication commends himself, and that even for his very Humility. Appealing both to Christians and to Heathens for the truth of it. *Humilitatem meam & Fratres omnes & Gentiles quoque optimi norunt & diligunt.*

28. In these two general Cases (the Particularities of which would be too tedious to insist upon) it may I suppose be allowable for a Man to commend or speak well of himself, and 'tis no more than what very Good and very Humble Men have done, and do every Day. But otherwise, and indeed generally speaking, the Advice of the Wise Man is to take place, *Let another Praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips, Prov. 27. 2.* Which are so far under the Seal of Humility, as not to be opened in our own Commendation. Indeed not to speak Evil of others, and not to speak Good of our selves, are two general Rules that belong to the government of the *Tongue*, though under two different Heads of Christian Duty, Charity forbidding the former, and Humility the latter. And that though the good which we say of our selves be never so true, and we give no greater Character of our selves than we deserve. For there is a great

A Treatise concerning Humility. 261

great deal of difference between *thinking* of our selves, and *speaking* of our selves. In thinking of our selves, as of any other intelligible Object, Truth only is to be regarded. And accordingly a Man may think well of himself, if he thinks truly in so thinking. He may think himself indued with such or such particular Perfections, as was said in the beginning, if it be indeed true that he is indued with them. But now in *speaking* of our selves, something else is to be attended besides the Truth, *viz.* whether it be a Truth fit to come from *my* Mouth. And if it be a Truth tending to my own Praise, it seems not so proper, First, because I am a prejudiced Person, and so not so likely to speak so justly and impartially of my self as either I would of another, or another would of me. Secondly, Because my speaking well of my self shews me not only to think well of my self, (which in some Cases may be allowed) but to be also *full* of that Thought, so full as to overflow and run over with it, to abound in Self-complacency, and to be even taken up and ingaged in the Admiration of my self, which is a state of Mind not so easily reconciled with Humility, any more than the discovery of it is with Prudence. And therefore I cannot think *Cicero* a good Casuist when speaking of his own Eloquence, he says, that he would not stick to say it was perfect, if

262 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

he thought so, nor would he fear the fault of Arrogance in saying the

* I take these words upon the Credit of St. Austin, having not that Book of Cicero's which he cites for them by me.

Truth. * *Dicerem perfectam si ita judicarem, nec in veritate crimen arrogantiae pertimescerem.* As if there were

nothing else to be considered or regarded in speaking of our selves, but the *Truth* of what we speak. Or as if a Man might always speak what he thought, or speak as well of himself as he thinks. Indeed a Man may think well of himself, if he does not think too well; that is, he may think the truth of himself as well as of any thing else, but it does not therefore follow that he may also take the same liberty to *speak* well of himself as long as he keeps within the compass of truth, and that because *thinking well* and *speaking well* of our selves, are as I have shewn, things of a very different Consideration, so that there is no consequence in arguing from one to the other. 'Tis not arguing *a Pari*. And therefore (by Cicero's good leave) I shall set it down as another Duty of Humility towards our selves, not to Praise or Commend our selves. This Duty of Humility flows from the very Essence of it. For if I think meanly of my self, why should I commend my self? We do not use to commend things which we think meanly of.

A Treatise concerning Humility. 263

29. Another is, not to desire to be thought highly of by others, nor to seek the Praise or Commendation of others, (that which we call Glory or Reputation) or to do any thing with that Prospect or upon that Consideration, any otherwise than with the same Cautions and Limitations, and for the same ends and purposes as before. This Duty of Humility seems to derive from the very Essence of it as much as the other. For if I think meanly of my self, why should I desire that others should think highly of me, or speak highly; why should I affect Fame or Popularity? For indeed that which they call a *Good Name* is no better if separated from the forementioned ends. A Good Name 'tis true is a valuable, or if you will, an invaluable thing, not to be valued by Money, and that because, as *Solomon* says, *it is better than Riches*, *Prov. 22*. And 'tis what all Men have valued, and what some seem to think they can hardly value enough, or at least too much. And yet if we consider what it is, *viz.* That it is nothing better nor worse than other Men's good word concerning us, their speaking well of us, their praising or commending us, we shall find that we have no more liberty here than in the former Case, and that the same Humility which obliges us not to commend our selves, obliges us also not to covet or seek the Praise or Commendation

264 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

of others, or which is all one in other words, a *Good Name*. Not to seek it I mean for it self, but only in order to such ends as may and ought to be sought for themselves. That is, if my having a *Good Name* be (as indeed it is) a necessary condition to qualify me for doing good, or if I am capable of doing more good with it than I am without it, as most certainly I am ; then I both may and ought so far, and upon that Consideration, to desire a *Good Name*, to be tender of my Reputation, and to endeavour to keep it when I have it, because I ought not to disable or incapacitate my self for doing good, which is also the reason why I ought to be tender of other Mens. But otherwise, as I have no reason to value what the World thinks or says of me, so if I do, 'tis plain that I seek my own Glory, and that because I seek it not in order to the Glory of God, but for it self. Which I take to be the proper Notion of *Vain-glory*. And I see no reason why a Man may not as well commend himself, as desire or seek *thus* to be commended. All designs therefore of Glory are to be avoided, unless it be in order to the Glory of God, whose is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, as our Saviour teaches us to acknowledge when we Pray.

30. But what if Men *will* commend me, and I foresee or presume that they will if I
Preach

A Treatise concerning Humility. 265

Preach such a Sermon, or Write such a Book, or do any other good Action, what must I to avoid their Praise, and the Credit that will redound to me from what I am about, either not do such things, or do them ill? No, go on with your work, pursue your undertaking, and let not Charity be a loser by your Humility, which does not oblige you to forbear or desist from a good Action, though Praise should be the consequence of it. No, nor to decline the praise it self provided it be only a consequence of the Action, and not the design of the Agent, or not design'd without that further Reference we were before speaking of. But yet however this Supposition places in our way another Case of Humility, and gives me occasion to speak of another Duty resulting from it, and that is concerning our Behaviour when Men do thus commend us. How must we *receive* that Praise or Commendation of theirs which we do not seek, and what must we do with it? The Duty I think here is, First, To receive it Modestly, without any sensible Expressions of Self-complacency, or significations of any Pleasure that we take in hearing our selves commended, As considering that we are but just what we are when Men have said never so many great or good things of us, for which we are neither the better nor the worse, and at the same time fearing lest God should
not

266 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

not Judge of us as *they* do. Secondly, Not to suffer their Praise to stay with us, but to pay it away again as soon as we receive it, to him to whom all Praise and Glory is due, in that Pious and truly Humble Ejaculation of the *Psalmist*, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give the Praise, Psalm 115.* And 'twas for failing in this that *Herod* was smitten by the Angel, because he gave not God the Glory, but received this Sacred Incense as if he had been God himself.

31. But because the Praise of Men in its most transient stay, and quickest passage, is apt to leave an impression of Vanity, a tincture of Self-complacency behind it, 'tis best to correct it with another Duty of Humility towards our selves, which is not to trust over-much to our own Understandings, not to be over-confident of our own Judgments, not to be too well assured of our own Abilities, or apt to rely upon our own Skill, Knowledge, or Conduct, especially in matters of Difficulty, or which are out of our *way* as we say, that is, which are besides our Education or Profession, and wherein we have had but little Experience. The effects of which Rule again will be to be free and ready if need be, (for some Cases may be so plain that they need it not) to communicate our Counsels and Designs to others, especially to our *Spiritual Guides*, and to be willing

A Treatise concerning Humility. 267

ling (for Humility is a very adviseable thing) to be directed by them, and when we have their Advice to be as willing to take and follow it, unless there should appear very evident reason to the contrary. Not to put our selves forward in Company, or affect to be the *Mouth* of it, not to talk a great deal, (as those most commonly do who have least to say) nor to dictate in our talk, but to forbear even a *positive look*, a Dogmatical Ayre, an Authoritative tone of Voice, and that assured Countenance wherein the Breeding of this Humble Age does so much consist. Not to abound in our own Sense, or to be wedded to our own Notions, Sentiments, Opinions or Ways, but to be as indifferent to our own Opinions as to other Mens, and to be determin'd only by reason and evidence of *Truth* in both. To suppose those that are considerably Older than our selves, and that stand upon the same level of Education with us, to be generally Wiser, as having more experience, and that those who have made any Art or Science their particular Study and Profession, do understand it better, and are more competent Judges in any Question or Controversie relating to it, than we are; and so, tho' not Absolutely to resign up our Understandings to them, and implicitly to receive whatever they say, yet not to be very forward to contradict them, and whenever we do, (as in some

268 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

some Cases there may be reason for it) to do it Modestly, with such Difference and Submission as may signifie that in the general we prefer their Judgments before our own, though in that particular we cannot think as they do. And so much at least we are to understand by that common Rule, *Cuilibet in sua arte credendum*, that every one is to be believed in his own Art or Profession. In fine, as the *Psalmist* observes of himself, *Not to exercise our selves in great matters, or in things that are too high for us*, *Psal. 131*. Not to be fond of great undertakings, not to be busie, meddling, or assuming, or apt to interpose our selves either in the private Affairs of other Men, or in the Affairs of the State, leaving the Government of the World to God, and those higher Powers who are ordain'd by him, not to covet high Stations, as being sensible of the weakness of our Heads, not to court Honours, Dignities or Preferments, not to be forward to Act upon the Stage of the World, or to love to be at one end of every thing that is moving in it, (there being a great deal of Pragmaticalness cover'd over with the name of a *Public Spirit*) not to affect to be a Leading Man, but to be content rather to be led, nor to be ambitious of great Charges, Offices, or Places of Trust either in the Church or in the State, as being doubtful of our Abilities to discharge them, as well
as

A Treatise concerning Humility. 269

as of our merit to deserve them. But on the contrary, to *restrain our selves*, and *keep our selves low*, as becomes those who do not trust to their own Understanding, there being great reason to presume, that they who are for climbing high, think they have good Heads.

32. And as Humility towards our selves will teach us not to trust to our own Understandings, so also not to trust to our own *Wills*. That is, I mean, not to confide in or presume upon the natural strength of them, so as to think our selves able to keep God's Commandments upon the stock of our own Power, without the Assistance of his Grace, or even with it to commit our Vertue to the hazard of Temptations, depending upon our Ability to overcome them, as if we could maintain our Vertue and Innocence against the Tempter upon any disadvantages of ground ; not to be over-confident of our being in a good State, commonly called a *State of Grace*, either as that may signifie such a Moral State of Mind and Life as fills up the measure of Evangelical Righteousness, and comports with the Terms of the Gospel, or else the Interest which we have in the favour of God, and the Promises of a better Life after this. Not to be over-confident or secure of either of these, and that notwithstanding the good Credit that *Assurance* may have in some Mens
Divi-

270 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Divinity. But such an Assurance does not well become Humility, nor will easily find place in a Mind that thinks meanly and lowly of it self. Or if we have (as no doubt we may) some reasonable and comfortable Grounds to believe and hope that we are in such a state, yet not to be confident or assured of our *persevering* in it for the future, as if all were sure and out of danger, which is as much as can be said of *Heaven*, and therefore in all reason too much for *Earth*, upon which our Life is a continual Warfare. But in opposition to all this, Humbly to implore the Grace of God with our Daily Bread, as being of equal necessity with it, and as we Pray not to be led into Temptation, so to take care not to lead our selves into it, but to avoid all Occasions, all Beginnings, and all Appearances of Evil, to shun even Danger, to take unto us the whole Armour of God, to be always upon our Guard, and to Watch and Pray lest we enter into Temptation. As also to fear always, and to work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling, and even while we think we stand, to take heed lest we fall.

33. But the Body is concern'd in the effects of Humility as well as the Mind, and therefore another Duty and Effect of Humility with relation to our selves will be, *Moderesty in our Dress and Apparel*. For though
it

A Treatise concerning Humility. 271.

it may be possible for a Man to be Humble in any Dress, yet he that truly is so, will not needlessly chuse or affect a Gaiety or Gaudiness in it, such as may shew that he sets a value upon himself, and endeavours to recommend himself to the esteem of others, and to draw upon himself their Observation and Regard. And though Humility be in the Heart and not in the Cloaths, yet since the Body is the Companion of the Soul, and helps with it to make up the Man, the Soul that is truly Humble will delight to have its Companion of a piece with it self, so Habited as may both comport with the low sense she has of her own worth, and serve to express it. Which indeed a modest Apparel does very much ; as on the contrary, nothing more betrays Levity of Spirit, Pride of Heart, Dissolution of Thought, and in one word, a *Trifling* Mind, than a vain Foppish Dress. Which indeed becomes the *well Bred Gentleman* almost as little as the *Christian*, and therefore leaving it to Dancing-Masters and Comedians, he also chuses to appear in such a Decency of Habit as suits with the Sobriety of a Serious, Manly, and Well-govern'd Mind. But much more will the *Humble Christian* do this. And 'tis sad to consider that a thing so contrary to Christian Modesty and Humility as Gaiety of Dress is, should be so much in the Mode of the World, and become even
the

272 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

the great concern of one half of Mankind. The words of the great Apostle concerning this matter are very remarkable. *In like manner also that Women adorn themselves in modest Apparel, with Shamefacedness and Sobriety. Not with broider'd Hair, or Gold, or Pearls, or costly Array. But (which becometh Women professing Godliness) with good works, 1 Tim. 2. 9.* Where beside the direction which is plain and positive, and capable of no Evasion, 'tis farther to be observed, that the Apostle by saying that good Works are the Ornament that becomes Women professing Godliness, plainly supposes that those other Ornaments do not. And if gaudiness of Apparel does not consist even with the profession of Godliness, much less does it with the *thing* it self.

34. There are some other Effects which Humility will have upon our selves, which I shall just throw together without staying long to descant upon them. Such as to be modest in our Behaviour, to affect no singularity, either in Dress, Language, or Carriage, to be sparing in our Speech, especially before our *Betters*, and not to use much *Action* when we speak, unless the nature of the thing we speak of, cannot be so well express'd without some movement of the Body to help out our words in representing the sentiment of our Minds. A Case which sometimes happens, especially in the *Passions*. For as there is a
fig-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 273

significancy in Motion, so there are some Passions which Motion only can speak. And then indeed it is reasonable and natural, which I take to be the true ground of that place which Motion has in *Oratory*. But ordinarily to affect or use a great deal of insignificant Action, (as it must be if ordinarily used) as it is too Theatrical a thing for common Conversation, so it shews too great a Vehemence and Concern in the Speaker, that he is solicitous for the event and success of his Discourse, and how he shall acquit himself before his Company, that he is full of himself, and sets a value upon his own Sense, and that his Mind is in a Commotion as well as his Body. Considerations which hold also against using a great deal of Action in *Preaching*, where all Appearances of Pride, Vanity, or even Self-concern, ought carefully to be avoided. To be free and easie, without putting on a shy Stifness, or a sullen Gravity, yet not to abound in Laughter, but to be rather inclining to the reserve, especially when the Subject of the Discourse is concerning other Mens faults, and the Scene of the Mirth lies not in *Things* but in *Persons*. Not to affect any stateliness in our gait, or to have any thing that is Phantastic in our way of Speaking, or manner of Address, aiming at hard words, or an overfine pronunciation of such as are common, with an af-

T

fect

274 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

fected posture of the Head, but above all to avoid that *Proud* and *Lofty look*, *Psal.* 131. which King *David* as great as he was, puts away from himself as the Companion of a High and Haughty Mind, and which his Son *Solomon* sets down by name in the number of those Six (or if you will Seven) things which the Lord hates, mentioning that in the head of them, *Prov.* 6. 16. Not to love to appear great in our way of Living, Habit, or Equipage, not to covet the acquaintance of great Persons, or to be seen in their Company, nor to boast of their Favours and Intimacies, ever and anon telling what this *Duke* said to us, or that *Earl*, or that *Learned Man*. Not to boast of our Birth or Parentage if it be great, nor to be ashamed of it if it be mean, as neither of our Trade, Calling, or Profession, or state of Life, though it be that of a Servant, considering that nothing of these can be so mean as our *Pride*, and that indeed nothing is truly mean that is Honest and Necessary, or if it be, that infinitely greater Persons than our selves have submitted to those Meannesses; that the Great Father of Mankind was no better than a Gardener, that Persons of a Princely Quality have kept Sheep, and that the Son of God himself, *came not to be ministered unto, but to minister*, *Mat.* 20. 28. Not to make our selves any way better than we are, nor to live above our
Rank

A Treatise concerning Humility. 275

Rank and Degree, or to wear Cloaths beyond our Quality, and that though we can pay for it. For though that be enough to satisfy *Justice*, yet that is not enough to satisfy *Humility*, which obliges us to be modest in our Dress; and considers not so much what we can afford or reach to, as what belongs to our *Place*, and becomes our *Degree*. A remark never more necessary to be made than in this Age, wherein the Degrees and Orders of Men are so confounded by every bodies striving to be as fine as they can, without any regard to their rank, that there is hardly any one's Quality to be known by their Habit, without a *Star* or a *Garter* to distinguish 'em. But Humility will make us go like our selves, and if need be, to descend beneath our selves, to be content with mean Fare, and mean Cloaths, and that not only when we can't afford better, but even when we can, that so she may lend to *Charity* what she does not spend upon her self. Humility will also make us content to be Poor and Low in the World, to bear to be neglected and overlook'd, to see Preferments and Promotions go besides us, and over our Heads, without regret, not to affect Popularity, or to make a Figure, or to be very much known, but to desire Privacy, Obscurity, and Retirement from the World, where we may study the knowledge of our selves rather than to be

276 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

known to others, possess our Souls in Patience and Meekness, and enjoy that *Rest* which Christ has promised to the Meek and Lowly in Heart.

35. But besides these Duties and Effects of Humility which are of a Personal concernment to all Men, or to the generality of them, I beg leave to offer something that relates to a more special sort of Men, I mean *Students*, those whose Profession or Choice it is to apply themselves to the Study of Learning and Knowledge. In the Prosecution and Management of which, there are some Duties and Rules of *Humility*, as well as other prudential Methods, to be observ'd. As,

First, Not to affect a *Universal Knowledge*. Meaning by that, not the perfect Knowledge of all things, which is that Omniscience which we ascribe to God, and can belong only to an Infinite Mind, and which therefore no Man can be supposed to affect, but to be excellently and eminently knowing in every thing. For though this may not be absolutely inconsistent with the capacity of a finite understanding as the other is, yet there is reason enough to think that neither the Capacity, nor the Life of Man will suffice for it, and therefore Humility will neither offer at it, nor pretend to it.

Secondly, As to particular Theories, not to set our selves to the study of what by all
the

A Treatise concerning Humility. 277

the study in the World we can never comprehend. Not to exercise our selves in great matters, or in things that are too high for us, lest we come under that Apostolical Censure of *intruding into those things which we have not seen, vainly puffed up by our fleshy Mind, Col. 2. 18.* There are many such things which are Incomprehensible by us, at least in this State. Things that we have no Notion of, and to which our Understandings are no ways proportion'd. And here a quiet and contented Ignorance, and an ingenious Confession of it, would much better become us than either a curious and inquisitive search, or a pretending to that Knowledge which we have not, in assigning imaginary Causes of real Effects, or taking up with empty and insignificant Terms for satisfactory Answers, rather than own some things to be out of our reach. Some Men seem to think themselves obliged in *honour* to determine upon every thing that comes before them, but when a Man is in the *Dark*, he were much better stand still than go forward.

Thirdly, Not to prosecute our Studies upon a Motive of *Vain-glory*, merely to exalt our selves above others, and to have the Reputation of greater Learning or Knowledge. The name of *Study* indeed carries with it a very plausible and reputable sound ; but a Man were much better be Idle (as pretious

278 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

as Time is) than to study for such an End ; and though Ignorance be the consequence of being so, he were much better be Ignorant and Humble, than Learned and Proud. Our Love of Truth ought to be Chast and Pure, and so should our Courtship of it be too; we should seek it for it self and its own excellency, without the mixture of any other End or Consideration, except that of the Glory of God, and the Edification of our Neighbour. These indeed are Pious and Charitable Ends, and such as hollow and sanctifie the Exercise ; but as for Fame and Reputation, the proposal of such base and unworthy Ends does but pollute it, and if the *Philosopher* cannot get above them, the *Christian* should.

Fourthly, And as a consequence of this to apply our studies not so much to things that are *Popular*, and in reputation for Learning, as to true, real, and useful Knowledge, the Knowledge of such Truths as serve to clear and inform our Understandings, to perfect and improve our Minds, such as make us really more wise in our selves, and more capable of instructing others, though they may not carry such an amusing shew of Learning, nor so fill out the Sails of our Reputation in the World, as some other things which are more in the common Vogue of it. But the end of Study is to *be* Wise, and not to *seem* so ;
and

A Treatise concerning Humility. 279

and Humility, which regards not Glory or Reputation in other Cases, will not take her Measures by it here, where the Inquest is for *Wisdom*.

I am not now considering the Rules whereby our Studies are to be conducted, but only so far as *Humility* is concern'd in them, and therefore shall only further add an excellent Passage which *St. Bernard* in his 36th Sermon upon the *Canticles* has to this purpose. He reduces the measure of knowing to the Order, the Earnestness or Affection, and the End. The *Order*, that that should be studied first which is of the nearest and most direct tendency to Salvation. The *Affection*, that that should be studied most earnestly, which is most apt to excite Love. The *End*, that we should not study to know for Vain-glory or Curiosity, but only for Edification, either our own or our Neighbours. For continues he, there are some who are willing to know only that they may know, which is a foul Curiosity. And there are some who are willing to know that they themselves may be known, which is a foul Vanity. And there are also some who are willing to know that they may sell their Knowledge, as for Money, or for Honours, which is a foul way of Trading. But there are also some who are willing to know that they may Edify, which is Charity. As also some who are willing to know that they may be Edified, which is Prudence. This Passage is considerable, and I commend

280 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

it to the consideration of all Young Students. The only thing is how to understand that part of it, which intimates that Truth is not to be sought for it self. Now 'tis plain that Truth may be sought for it self in opposition to *Operation*, that being what distinguishes speculative from practical Sciences. And Truth *must* be sought for it self in opposition to Vain-glory; which is what I mean by saying, that the love of it ought to be Pure and Chast. But it ought not to be sought for it self in opposition to, or exclusively of the Glory of God, which according to the Apostle's Rule ought to be refer'd to, even in such natural and indifferent Actions as *Eating* and *Drinking*, much more in our Studies and serious Meditations. If the Motions of the Body ought to be directed to it, much more the Applications of the Mind.

36. Among these effects of Humility upon our selves, some perhaps may wonder why I have not reckon'd *Blushing* or Shamefacedness as they call it. But 'tis because I am not so well satisfied whether it be one of them or no. It passes I think generally for *Modesty*, but perhaps Pride will be found to be at the bottom of it, and to have an equal, if not a greater share in it than the other. It seems indeed to me to be a kind of mix'd Passion, arising partly from an over-concern to please, or an Ambitious desire to acquit ones
self

A Treatise concerning Humility. 281

self well, and partly from a fear or doubt that we shall not. There is a concurrence of both these; for if we should suppose either of them to be absent, either that we did not affect to please or come off with Credit, but were indifferent whether we did or no, or were secure that we should, there would be no blushing. And therefore if we blush, 'tis a sign we are affected both those ways. In which indeed the diffident part partakes of the nature of Humility, as resulting from the low sense we have of our selves; but the Ambitious part approaches nearer to Pride. As on the other hand, the confident part that we shall succeed well partakes of Pride, but the being indifferent whether we do or no comes nearer to Humility. And either of these is enough to take off Blushing or Shamefacedness; so that when I see a Man deliver himself without concern, I cannot conclude that he is opinion'd of himself, as not knowing whether his unconcern'dness proceeds from an *Indifferency*, or from a *Security*. But when I see a Man *Blush*, and in a disorder, I may conclude that he has an Ambition to acquit himself well, because 'tis his fear that he shall not that makes him so concern'd. And yet this goes for the modestest Man of the two, but I think without reason. We will put a Case, Two Men are to make an Oration in Public. One blushes, and trembles, and stammers,

282 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

ters, and is all over in a disorder. The other speaks without any confusion or concern at all. And because he does so, he is look'd upon as a Man well opinion'd of himself, whereas the other passes for a very Humble and Modest Man. But why so? Are you sure that this Man's unconcern'dness is from the Opinion he has of his own sufficiency, and his confidence that he shall come off with Applause? Why may it not as well be from his Indifferency whether he does or no, as not valuing Praise or Reputation. It may be from one as well as the other; and till you know which of these it is that governs the Man, you cannot judge what manner of Spirit he is of. Whereas he that expresses so much confusion and disorder in speaking, though he shews a diffidence of himself and of his success, (which indeed so far bespeaks his Modesty and Humility) yet 'tis plain, that at the same time he also confesses a great concern for his Reputation, since a mere diffidence of what a Man is not concern'd *for*, will not give him such a disorder. So that upon the whole, the unconcern'd speaker may possibly be an Humble Man, whereas the Bashful and Blushing speaker, must have a touch of Vanity in his Constitution. But what then, are we to appear on such occasions with an ayre of Confidence, and an hardy Assurance? No, that would be as much in the
the

A Treatise concerning Humility. 283

the other extream, and there is no occasion for either. The right temper is, neither a blushing Bashfulness, nor a confident Assurance, (the former shewing that we covet Reputation, the latter, that we are too secure of it) but only a free, easie simplicity of Behaviour, with so much unconcern'dness as may serve to keep us from being in a disorder, and no more. This shews the Mind to be Master of it self, and to be free from any discomposure of Passion, which is the best temper both for a *Wise* and for an *Humble* Man.

37. These are partly the Duties, and partly the Effects of Humility towards God, our Neighbour, and our Selves. And as far as they are the *Effects*, so far they may be also consider'd as *Signes* of it. For though all Signes are not Effects, yet all Effects are Signes of those Causes of which they are the Effects; that is, they are that whereby we may come to the knowledge of the Cause, at least as to the Being or Existence of it. As by Smoke, I come to know that there is Fire, though it does not instruct me what kind of thing Fire is as to the Essence or Nature of it. Though even that too perhaps in some Cases may in great measure be gathered from the Effect; but however, as to the simple Existence of the Cause, that the Effect is a certain indication of. For the Effect being from
the

284 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

the Cause, we may by the Effect conclude the Cause either to be or to have been, since if the Cause absolutely were not, the Effect could not be. Therefore if the Effect is, we may conclude that the Cause is too, by reason of the Connexion that is between them, which is the same as to say, that such an Effect is a *Sign* of such a Cause.

38. There will be no need of making a distinct Chapter concerning the *Signes* of Humility, since these very Effects of it are *Signes* in the same Measure and Proportion as they are Effects. And indeed I know no other *Signes* of Humility, than the Effects which it has upon us. Not but that I may know whether I am Humble or no, as whether I am Charitable, directly and immediately, by reflecting upon the state and temper of my Mind, and considering how I stand affected to my self, as in the other Case how I stand affected as to others; but yet as far as Humility is knowable by any thing distinct from it self, or by *Signes*, (for the Sign is always distinct from the thing signified) it must be known by its Effects. And though I my self may know it by a direct View, as being conscious to my self of the disposition of my own Mind, yet another who knows not that, cannot judge of my Humility, which is an inward thing, but by some outward Sign or other, that is by its *Effects*; which
though

A Treatise concerning Humility. 285

though not so absolutely necessary, will yet be of great use to *me* also in the knowledge of my self, as adding more Light to my direct View. And therefore here it is that the consideration of the Signes of Humility does properly come in, these *Signes* being not really different from the *Effects* of it.

39. Since then the effects of Humility are also Signes of it in the same measure and proportion that they are Effects; that we may the better judge of the *signification* of them, we are here to consider, that the effects of Humility are either *inward* or *outward*, such as it produces in our own Minds, and which affect the temper of them, or such as it produces in our visible Behaviour. Those that are inward, (as suppose our not desiring Honour or Glory) are Signes to our selves only, and not to others, any farther than we please to communicate them. But those that are outward (as suppose bragging or boasting, or taking place of our Betters) may be Signes to others as well as to our selves, and perhaps better to others than to our selves, since others can in many Cases both better observe what we speak or do, than we our selves, and also judge of it with more Indifference. But then again there is this further difference, that those effects of Humility which are inward, and affect the temper of the Mind, are more sure and satisfying, tho'
not

286 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

not so open and public Indications of it. And here a Man cannot be very easily deceiv'd, if he be at all careful in the Reflections which he makes upon what passes in himself. Or if he be deceiv'd, 'tis not that the *Sign* deceives him, but he deceives himself in thinking he has that Sign, when indeed he has it not. But now those effects of Humility which are outward, are not such sure and unerring Signes of it as always to be trusted to, or depended upon, in the Judgment that we make either of our selves or others, and that because though they are the Effects of Humility, (that is such Effects as Humility may and does produce) yet they may also proceed from other Causes too, and sometimes from that which is quite contrary to it, even from *Pride* it self.

40. This makes the Signes of Humility (those I mean which are outward, and fall under common observation) to be very *Equivocal*, and almost of as loose and uncertain a signification as *words* that are so call'd. For indeed there is a great deal of *false Humility* in the World, much more than there is of true. The Humility of those who Humble themselves Wickedly, and who bow their Bodies with a stiff Heart, as *St. Bernard* speaks. Not that Humility it self is false, any more than there is any such thing as false *Gold*, but

*In Vigil. Natalis
Dom. Sermon. 6.*

A Treatise concerning Humility. 287

but *Men* are false in counterfeiting the Royal Metal, in forging something like it that is not it, and so it is here. Humility is counterfeited, as most pretious things are, only more perhaps than any one thing besides. There are a great many things in the World, especially in the Politer and better Bred part of it, that pass for Humility, or rather for the Signes and Tokens of it, which are only the *Refinements* of *Pride*. Not but that they are Signes of Humility too, (or else they would not be made use of) as far as they are such Effects, as Humility does and will ordinarily produce ; but then there being other, and sometimes contrary Causes that will also produce the same, it oftentimes happens that the Sign is where the thing signified is not, and that though the Sign of Humility be hung out, it is Pride that lodges, and commands too within.

41. I shall give an Instance or two of this. It is an effect of Humility, and by the great Master of it reckon'd for one, for a Man when invited to a Wedding (and the same reason holds for any other Assembly) *to go and sit down in the lowest Room*, *Luke 14. 10.* And as this is an effect of Humility, so consequently it is so far, and ordinarily speaking, a Sign or Indication of it too. And yet, as if a Man should take the lowest room, with a design that he might appear or be thought

288 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

thought Humble, or with a View of being promoted by others to his due Place with greater Advantage of Honour and Respect, he would be a most intolerably Proud and Vain Man in the one Case, and as Wicked a *Hypocrite* in the other ; so there is no doubt but that *Hypocrisy*, which always desires to appear better than she is, and which to be sure can never appear better than in the dress of Humility, may suffice to put a Man upon such a Condescension as that of taking the lowest Room, as effectually as the truest and profoundest Humility in the World can do. And there is as little doubt but that a Proud Man may do the same, if he thinks to gain that return of Honour by it which our Saviour mentions as the *Event* of such a Voluntary Cession, *the having Worship in the presence of them that sit at Meat with him.*

42. And so again not to Praise or Commend our selves, as also Modestly to receive it when given to us by others, is another Effect, and consequently another ordinary Sign of Humility. And yet I doubt not, but that a Proud Man may do the very same thing, and more. He may not only forbear speaking in his own Praise, and take it Modestly when given, but may even decline and disclaim it as a thing that is not his Due, and beyond his Merit ; he may positively refuse it and shrink from it ; nay, he may act
the

A Treatise concerning Humility. 289

the Modest and Self-denying part so far as to lessen and vilify himself, and speak very diminishingly and undervaluingly of his own worth. A Proud Man may do all this, and not only so, but he may do it even *from* his Pride, and very much indulge his Pride and Vanity, and serve the ends of it in so doing. He may *do* it as 'tis a part, or may be so reputed at least, of *Civility* and good Breeding, or out of *Hypocrisy* as before, that he may have the Appearance of an Humble Man. And he may do it from his *Pride*, as a means to recommend himself to the greater esteem of others, and to draw from them that very Praise which he so modestly seems to decline. So that both he that commends himself, and he that disparages himself may both intend the same thing, and propose but one end, though one of them may manage it more *finely* than the other, as Sailing to the same Point by a side Wind. Nay he that disparages, or speaks degradingly of himself, may possibly be much the Prouder Man of the two. At least his making so bold with himself is no Argument to the contrary; the reason why he does that, not being perhaps that he is less Proud, but that he understands the World better, and knows how to play his Game more cunningly. So that oftentimes that which passes for the Humility of the *Christian*, may be only the *Fineness* and the

290 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Address of the Gentleman. But is he the less Proud for that ? No, but if you will believe St. *Austin*, rather the more, who tells us, that the counterfeiting of Humility is the greater Pride. *Simulatio Humilitatis major superbia est.*

De Sancta Virginitate. Cap. 43.

However 'tis certain that it is the greater *Vice*, since a counterfeited Humility has all the evil of Pride, besides the addition of Hypocrisy, which makes it worse than Pride, which is plain and undisguised.

43. What has been here observ'd concerning the uncertainty and fallaciousness of the Signes of Humility, may also in some measure be applied to the Signes of Pride, whose Effects may also proceed from other Causes, and so not be certain and unquestionable Signes of it. Only with this difference, that Pride being a thing so generally hateful and misbecoming, 'tis not to be supposed that Men will be so apt to imitate it, as they are to imitate or act the so much more agreeable and becoming part of Humility, and consequently they will not so often do those things that belong to Pride, or are natural Indications of it, from other Causes, as they will do those things that belong to Humility from other Causes. By which means it comes to pass, that the Signes of Pride are more certain and conclusive than the Signes of Humility, this being a thing that every body is fond

A Treatise concerning Humility. 291

fond of, and so disposed to counterfeit, whereas hardly any body can be supposed designedly to counterfeit Pride, though by the ayre of their Countenance, the make of their Body, the manner of their Movement, or by the singularity of their Temper or Humour they may be so unhappy as to have some of the natural Appearances of it upon them. But yet these Appearances, as proceeding from other Causes, are no sure Signes of Pride. We commonly say that such a one looks like a Rogue. And yet we do not think that reason enough to Indict him for one, because 'tis possible that an Honest Man may have such a look. And so in the present Case. And accordingly 'tis a thing of frequent experience, that some Men whom at a distance, and by what we could observe of their Manner and outward Appearance, we took for Proud Men, we find afterwards upon a nearer view, and a more intimate acquaintance with them, to be very remote from that Character, and perhaps to have more of the true Spirit of Christian Humility, than some others who have carried a more promising shew of it.

44. We may make a Practical improvement of this Consideration, which is this, that since there is so much uncertainty in these Signes, we may hence first observe how hard and difficult a thing it is to judge of Humility or Pride, or to know when Men are either Hum-

292 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

ble or Proud by what appears to us of them, the Signes and Appearances of both (but especially of the former) being so very doubtful and fallacious. For it is here very often as in *Perspective*, where Bodies are represented as variously rising or subsiding, elevated or depressed upon a *plain surface*, where there are really no such Elevations or Depressions. And so Men have oftentimes the Tokens and Appearances of Pride or Humility, when really they are not so inwardly affected as they outwardly appear. And therefore it must needs be very difficult by what *appears* to judge what really *is*. But then Secondly we may hence further observe, how slow and cautious we should be in passing Sentence, where there is so much danger of being deceived. We should not therefore make any great haste to judge by these Signes, either as to our own Humility, or as to other Men's Pride. Not as to our own Humility, lest we be too favourable and indulgent to our selves. Not as to other Men's Pride, lest we be over-hard and severe in our Censures of *them*. But as to our selves, we can hardly be too severe. And here the best rule of Prudence I think will be, when we find a Sign of Humility to suspect it false, and when we find a Sign of Pride, to examine whether it be not true.

C H A P. VII.

*The Sinfulness, Odiousness, and Folly of
Pride. With some reflections upon the
Pride of the present Age.*

1. **W**E have hitherto dwelt upon the Consideration of Humility, and have found a very peaceful and pleasant dwelling in the low Valleys of it. Let us now turn our Eye from the Valley towards the Hill, not that we can hope to advantage our selves by the New Prospect, but only the better to indear and recommend the Old. I need not stay so long upon this part as otherwise I should, having already laid the grounds of all that can, or at least that need be said upon it. And truly, unless the Subject were more agreeable and entertaining, 'tis no great matter whether I do or no. 'Tis true indeed, Men have a Natural Curiosity for *Monsters*, but Pride is too common a one to be much stared at.

2. By the Sinfulness of Pride, I mean here the *Comparative* Sinfulness of it, (in like proportion as was observ'd concerning the Excellency of Humility) that which makes it so very Evil and Sinful as it is. Now this is

294 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

not the Authority that forbids it, for so all Sins are equal, as being forbidden by the same Authority and Transgressions of the same Law, but the inward Reason and Nature of the thing. The Sinfulness then of Pride, as that of all other Sins, is its being against reason, or which comes much to the same thing, the opposition that it naturally carries to the true good and interest of Man, that being the reason why it should not be, as also of the Law that forbids it. So in general,

3. But more particularly, the Sinfulness of Pride is that it offends against, and contradicts, the whole *reason of Humility*. What that is we have already shewn at large, and by doing so, have in great measure prevented what would have fallen in to be said here, since whatever makes for the reasonableness of Humility, is at the same time a direct Argument against Pride. And therefore since Humility appears to be so reasonable, so excellent, and so absolutely necessary a Vertue as we have shewn it to be, it must, and cannot but be observ'd to follow, that Pride which is so directly contrary to all this, must needs carry the same degree and proportion in Wickedness as the other does in Goodness, and so be as great a Vice as the other is a Vertue.

4. But to open this a little more particularly. Pride is first of all a very *uncreately* Sin.

A Treatise concerning Humility. 295

Sin. Every Sin is not so, nor do I well know whether any other be in so high a degree, except the *Hatred* of God. That indeed is strictly an uncreaturely Sin, because a Creature, even as a Creature, is bound to love God, with all his Heart, Soul and Mind, and if he does not, he Sins against the fundamental Law, not only of his Nature, but also of his very *Creation*. But as for our other Sins, they are indeed Sins against the Nature and the Happiness of Man, according to their several kinds and degrees; but do not all of them affect him precisely as a Creature. But Pride does; and he that is possess'd of it, does in effect disown his Creation, and like *Lucifer*, affect to be like the Most High. Therein we say *his* Pride consisted; and all Pride has something of it, enough to know from whom it derives its *Extraction*. The Angels in Heaven affected to be like God in *Power*, and *Adam* in Paradise affected to be like him in *Knowledge*, but in both there was an Affectation of something peculiarly Divine, and a reaching beyond their Creaturely State and Measure.

5. We have shewn that Man ought to be Humble as a Creature, therefore *that* Man who is otherwise, does in effect (in the same sense as Wicked Men are said to deny God, that is *practically* and *implicitly*) deny himself to be one. He that is Proud does not be-

296 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

have himself like a Being that might not have been, that has no necessity of being either in its Self, or from its Cause, which as it let him alone in his Nothing so long, so might as well not have call'd him out of it at all. He does not behave himself like a Being that was from Nothing, and that was so lately Nothing, unless it be as *Like* imports Fact and not Right, in the same sense as Upstarts and Persons of the meanest Extraction are observ'd to be generally the Proudest, and so indeed his *Behaviour* is but too much like his *Original*, but otherwise certainly as widely different from it as is possible. Neither does he behave himself like a Being, that even while he is does so far partake of not Being, as to depend upon a Superiour Cause for every moment of his continuance, and needs only the cessation of his sustaining Will to annihilate him. For the natural effect of our dependance upon God, is to walk Humbly with him; and therefore the Proud Man does, by the Language of his *Behaviour* at least, deny that dependance. Which also he more directly denies, by Glorifying as if he had not receiv'd, and by seeking and taking that Glory to himself which is God's Peculiar. So that every way he does as good as disown his Creaturely State and Character.

6. But then if a Proud Man so far forgets himself, and the very Law of his Being, as
not

A Treatise concerning Humility. 297

not to behave himself like a Creature, or as a Creature ought to do, much less will his Behaviour be found to be like what might most justly and reasonably be expected from a *Sinner*, who has infinitely more reason to be Humble than a Creature, as having corrupted that innocent Nature which God gave him, besides the many false steps he has made in his Life, for which he ought for ever to lye down in his Shame, and for which the Cloathing of Humility would be a much better covering than that of *Fig-leaves*. Pride then in a Sinner, is a much more inexcusable and insufferable thing than in a Creature, as adding to the Viciousness of a foolish Vanity; the very height of the most shameless Impudence. And if the Devil be Proud now (as no doubt he is) in the midst of his Sin and Misery, his Pride must be quite another thing from that whereby he fell when he was an Angel of Light, as having so much less to be Proud of, and so much more reason to be Humble *now* than he had *then*. A circumstance of Aggravation, wherein *our* Pride is concern'd no less than *his*, and which makes them both to be something so impudently and extravagantly Wicked, as one cannot think of without the greatest Wonder and Abhorrence. Pride that sits so ill upon a Creature, is monstrous in a Sinner,

7. But

298 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

7. But then besides Sin, we have also the weight of a multitude of Natural *Infirmities*, both of Body and Mind, to sink us yet lower into the Abyss of Humility; and therefore if notwithstanding so many depressing weights, we will yet proudly rise and exalt our selves on high, as 'tis a sign our Pride is so much the stronger in us, that can contend against so many Humbling Arguments, so also does it make it sit still the more unhand somly and misbecomingly upon us, as being so very unsuitable and disagreeable to such a weak and infirm Nature as ours is. And indeed in these two last respects, the Pride of Man has an Aggravation beyond that of the fallen Angels; who as before the Fall, they had no Sin to make them Humble, so since the Fall, they have none of those Natural Infirmities to Humble them that we have, being as much Angels as to the natural force and power of their Natures, and perhaps every way (Innocence and Goodness only excepted) as ever they were. But we have *Infirmity* as well as Sin to Humble us, which still the more aggravates our Pride, and makes it the less excusable. Which may be a good reason for that saying of the Son of *Sirach*, that *Pride was not made for Men*, *Ecclus.* 10. 18.

8. But that which aggravates it most of all, and makes it to be most exceeding Sinful, is, that it is a denial of our *dependance* upon

A Treatise concerning Humility. 299

upon God, for all our Perfections and Indowments both of Mind and Body, all the good which we either are or have. Which good things, though never so valuable in themselves, cannot be a greater Temptation to Pride, than the having received them, is an Argument for Humility, since there is no pretence for being Proud of what is not our own. And therefore if we are so, we do as good as imply that it *is* our own, that we our selves are the Original Fund and Principle of those Perfections whereby we *differ*, and wherein we *glory*, and so set up for a sort of *Independent* Beings, which besides the Impiety of it, must also be the greatest ingratitude towards him from whose fullness we all receive, as being a denial of those just Acknowledgments which we owe to his Bounty. But this is the ingratitude of Pride. For as a *Receiver* ought not to Glory, so if we *do* Glory, we do by consequence imply that we are not Receivers, but Original Proprietaries of what we have. And therefore says the Apostle, *why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received ?* So that in the Apostle's account, *Glorying* amounts to a Virtual disowning of our dependency upon God, and of our being beholden to him for his Gifts; than which there cannot be a greater Ingratitude or Impudence in a Creature. Especially considering that it is also to put our selves in
God's

300 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

God's Place, to usurp that Praise and Honour which is peculiarly and incommunicably due to him, and so is *Sacrilege* too as well as *Ingratitude*.

9. Well, but besides this contradiction of Pride to the whole reason of Humility, the great Evil of it will further appear from the Opposition which it carries to its Excellency, in those bad effects which it has upon our selves, upon others, and upon the whole state of the common Interest. Which being not very tuneable strings, I shall, to avoid the discord they would make, but just strike them over. Its first ill effect is upon the Mind wherein it dwells, in making us restless and uneasie to our selves, like that *troubled Sea*, *Isa. 57. 20.* to which the Prophet compares the Wicked, but which is no where found so much as in *Pride*, whose perpetual Workings make a perpetual Storm and Tempest in the Breast, which with this restless Passion can have no quiet within, nor for want of it enjoy any without. It also sours our Temper, puts an ill grace upon our Behaviour, makes it odd and fantastie, singular and untoward, disagreeable and unseemly, unacceptable, offensive and disrelishing. It makes our Conversation also burthenesome, grating, and unpleasant, and so renders us every way as troublesome to others as to our selves, who instead of enjoying, do but do *Penance*
in

A Treatise concerning Humility. 301

in our Company. It is an Enemy to *Knowledge* and true Wisdom, and to all manner of intellectual improvement, and so undermines it self, and throws down one of the Battlements upon which it stands; there being nothing that Men are so apt to be Proud of as Knowledge, which as the Apostle observes, *puffs up*, and yet to this no such Enemy as Pride, especially to the knowledge of our *selves*, which Pride flies as its own fatal and mortal Enemy, and to the Knowledge of God, upon whom a Proud Man looks *afar off*, as God does upon him. And therefore St. *Austin* complains, that the swelling of his Face did

*Confess. Lib. 7.
Cap. 7.*

shut up his Eyes. *Tumore meo separabar abs te, & nimis inflata facies claudebat oculos meos.* As much as to say, that he could not see out for his swell'd Face. And accordingly, he confesses his Pride to have been a great Obstruction to him in his first Application of himself to the study of the Scriptures, in these very Elegant, and to the present Purpose no less remarkable words.

Cum primo puer ad Divinas Scripturas ante vellem asserre acumen discutiendi, quàm pietatem quærendi, ego ipse contra me perversis moribus claudebam januam Domini mei. Quum pulsare deberem ut aperiretur, addebam ut clauderetur. Superbus enim andebam quærere, quod nisi Humilis

*De diversis.
Sermo. 63. Cap.
5.*

302 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

lis non potest invenire. Quanto vos beatiores estis modo, quam securi discitis, quàm utiliter quicunq; adhuc parvuli estis in nido fidei, & spiritalem escam accipitis. Ego autem miser, cum me ad volandum idoneum putarem, reliqui nidum, & prius cecidi quàm volarem. A Passage well worth the notice and consideration of all young Persons who apply themselves to the study of Divine things; to the knowledge of which Humility, if not the best, is however a very necessary Preparation. As indeed it is to any Knowledge; for Pride is that *Beam* in the Eye, which darkens and obscures the light of the Mind, and indisposes it for the Contemplation and Vision of Truth.

10. But to go on, Pride is also an utter Enemy to *Goodness* and all Christian Perfection, both as depreiating the value of whatever Excellency we have, and as indisposing us for endeavouring after such further degrees of Goodness as we have not yet attain'd to, upon a Presumption that we are already possess'd of them. And so what we have it spoils, and what we have not it hinders. It is also a profess'd and irreconcilable Enemy to true Christian *Contentment*, defies and defeats the whole Art of it; nor is it a better Friend to the best ground upon which that excellent Vertue is founded, Submission to God's Providence, which never
fits

A Treatise concerning Humility. 303

sits easie, either upon the Understanding, or upon the Desires of a Proud Man, but when he himself is the darling of it. It is also a sworn Enemy to *Gratitude*, as taking all kindneses for the just reward of its deserts. It makes Men quarrellsome and contentious, peevish and passionate, impatient of Injuries, jealous and captious, easie to be provoked, and hard to be reconciled, rude and unfociable, pragmatrical and meddling, ambitious and aspiring, forward and undertaking, troublesome and ungovernable, resolute and unadvisable, disrespectful to their Betters, disobedient to their Superiours, unfit to govern, and unwilling to be governed, Factious in the State, and Schismatical in the Church. It is also (according to St. *Austin's* Remark) *Mater Hereticorum*, the Mother of Heresy in the Faith, by putting Men upon Innovations in Religion, and is also an Enemy to Faith it self, by hindring Men from submitting their Understandings to the Authority of Divine Revelation, in all such instances of it as transcend the capacity of Human Reason. But the worst and most pernicious effect of Pride is, that it indisposes us for Grace, and unfits us for Glory, from the possession of which the Angels fell by Pride, and in the disposition to which we stand by Humility.

II. To all this it may be further added, that Pride is a *Lye*, as being a false representation

304 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

tation of our selves to our selves, to God Almighty, and to the World. Whereas Humility is the very Truth. 'Tis thinking of our selves justly and soberly, as we truly are, and as we ought to think, according to the Apostle's Expression. But Pride is to weigh our selves in a false Ballance, to think intemperately of our selves, more *highly* than we ought to think, and so is a standing practical Lye, such a one as the Vain-glorious Angel told from the beginning, when he affected the place of God, and said within himself that he would be like the most High. And as Pride is it self a Lye, so is it also the greatest *Liar* in the World. For the natural effect of Pride is bragging and boasting, and that as naturally runs into *Lying*, to supply Materials for it. For Truth will not always do; a little bragging will soon exhaust the narrow stock of it, and when that fails, it must be help'd out by a little invention, rather than a good fancy should be baulkt, or a good story spoil'd. And 'tis very comical to observe how strangely some vain People, when they are upon this bragging strain, will romance upon themselves and their Families, their Estates and their way of Living, not regarding so much what is true, as what makes for the purpose of their Vanity, and so giving a falser account of themselves when Living, than even their *Epitaphs* will do when they

A Treatise concerning Humility. 305

they are Dead. So great a *Lye*, and so great a *Lyar* is Pride. And accordingly 'tis remarkable, that our Saviour Christ expresses the fall of the Angels by their not abiding in the Truth. *He was a Murtherer from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth, because there is no Truth in him, John 8. 44.* By all which it appears what a Wicked and Abominable thing Pride is, and that though 'twas an Angel's Sin, yet 'tis a *Devilish* Vice.

12. And that it is so, will yet more fully appear by this further Observation, that other Vices do fight against and assault only those Vertues which are contrary to them, and whereby they themselves are destroyed. As Lust fights against Chastity, Malice against Charity, Gluttony against Temperance, &c. which seems a moderate, because a kind of a self-defensive War. But now Pride not content with the extinction of this or that single Vertue, or of that which is directly opposite to it, and destructive of it, the Vertue of *Humility*, invades and makes War upon all the Vertues, and like a Cruel Conqueror, that without pity or favour puts all to the Sword, kills and destroys them all ; so that we may say of it what St. Paul did of *Elymas* the Sorcerer, that 'tis the *Enemy of all Righteousness*. And if we say the *Child of the Devil* too, that part of the Character will agree to it as well as the other, since it

306 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

has so much of his Hellish Enmity and Antipathy to all Goodness, is so set upon the ruin of it, and so resolv'd as it were to spoil and demolish every part of the Spiritual Building, every feature of the Image of God in Man. So that Pride is a sort of universal Evil; and whereas other Vices, like lighter distempers, affect this or that particular part only, this, as a Malignant or Pestilential Disease, corrupts a Man's whole Habit and Constitution. An instance of which dire Malignity, we have in the fallen Angels, who by their Pride were turn'd into Devils. Oh how does it concern us to beware and take heed how we come under the Dominion of so fatal a Vice, lest it prove our ruin too, and we *fall like one of the Princes* !

13. But after all, what a great Evil Pride is, we may see and read in the *punishment* of it, and that perhaps more clearly and plainly than in any Argument or Consideration from the nature of the thing it self. God punish'd it severely, and with a Judgment worthy of himself and it. He punish'd it with the loss of Heaven, and with the pains of Hell, by an utter Banishment from himself, the Fountain of all Good, and by a detrusion into the Bottomless Pit of Sin and Misery, by an Eternal Proscription from the Region of Happiness, and the Joys of his Beatific Presence, and by a Commitment to the everlasting

A Treatise concerning Humility. 307

ing Prison and Chains of Darknes. For so St. Peter tells us, *That God spared not the Angels that Sinned, but cast them down to Hell, and delivered them into Chains of Darknes, to be reserved unto Judgment,* 2 Pet. 2. 4. But then if God punish'd Pride so very terribly in the first and noblest Creatures that he had made, and that were the nearest Transcripts of himself, we have all the reason in the World to conclude and expect, that if we follow them in their Crime, we shall also follow them in their Punishment. And therefore since he spared not these *natural Branches* of Happiness, let us take heed lest he also spare not us who are to be *grafted* into their place. They were broken off by Pride, and we stand by Humility. Let us not therefore be High-minded, but Fear. And accordingly, both St. *Austin* and St. *Bernard* alledge the Punishment of the Fallen Angels, as an Example of that Punishment which our Pride is to expect. Says the former, *Caveant futurum Judicium; ne cum Mundi Principe judicentur, quem judicatum imitantur.* Let them beware of the future Judgment, lest they be judged with the Prince of the World, whom judged they imitate. And again, *Ne sibi existimet parci superbia dura Mortalium, de superbiorum supplicio terrenda est Angelorum.* Lest the hardy Pride of Mortals should expect to be spared,

*In Evangel. Jo-
an. Tract. 95.*

308 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

it is to be terrified with the punishment of the Proud Angels. And says the latter, *Quid tu superbis Terra & Cinis ? Si superbientibus Angelis Deus non pepercit, quanto magis tibi Putredo & Vermis ?* Why art thou Proud thou Dust and Ashes ? If God spared not the Angels that were Proud, how much more will he not spare thee who art but Corruption and a Worm ? The portion then of Pride, is exclusion from the Kingdom of Heaven, and all that Misery which follows upon it. So it was in the beginning, and so it will be in the end ; so it was with the Angels, and so it will be with us, if we partake with them in their Wickedness. And therefore even from hence we may gather, what a great and provoking Sin Pride is, upon which God has inflicted, and will inflict so great a Punishment.

14. I shall only further add upon this Head, that as there is so much Sin in Pride, so there is a great deal of Pride in all Sin, as it is a preference of our own Will before God's, and a pursuance of Happiness in methods of our own choosing, rather than in such as God has been pleased to direct us to. As for Happiness it self which is the *End*, that God and we are both agreed in. We would be Happy, and God is as willing that we should be so. But we differ as to the *way*. God who knows our Nature, what Happiness is
 suita-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 309

suitable and proportionable to that Nature, and what means naturally lead to that Happiness, would have us pursue this Happiness in the way of Vertue and Goodness. But we would be Happy in other ways of our own devising. And this is also the great difference between a good Man and a bad. A good Man is not only content that God should chuse the end for him, but the means too, as considering that God knows best what means will serve *his* end, and as being satisfied that the way which *he* prescribes must needs be best. Whereas a Wicked Man though he likes God's choice as to the end, it being the very same that he himself proposes, yet as to the *Means*, there he leaves him, and is willing to chuse for himself. And so whereas God would have him Happy in the ways of Piety, Righteousness, and Sobriety, he chuses rather to seek Happiness in the soft ways of Pleasure and Worldly Interest, which is in effect to suppose that he can chuse a better way for the attainment of Happiness than that which God has prescribed. A strange degree of Pride and Presumption for a Creature to be guilty of, and yet such as is to be found more or less in every Sin that a Man commits. Which makes that saying of St. *John* verifiable in more senses than one, *he that commits sin is of the Devil.*

310 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

15. And now that a Vice so very Sinful as Pride is, should also be very *Odious*, is not at all to be wonder'd at, because indeed all Sin is so, as being the greatest Evil, and so the just Object of our greatest Abhorrence. And there is still so much love of Order, Justice, and Truth in Human Nature, as to hate whatever is contrary to it, as being contrary to our reason at the same time, though this Hatred, by reason of the competition of something else which we hate more, be not always effectual to determine and regulate our practice. But then this natural Hatred of Sin, though baffled and over-ruled in our *selves* by the force of a superiour Temptation, (some sensible Good or Evil which outweighs and over-powers it) returns again in its full force in the Sins of *other* Men; where having no Temptation to reconcile us to it, we are left to our natural abhorrence of it, which then works freely, and is the only thing that affects the Mind. And so Men hate, and even loath and detest those Sins in others, which yet they allow themselves in the commission of, looking upon those Sins with their advantages in themselves, whereof they consider in others only the pure and abstract Malice.

16. But though all Sin be thus Naturally Odious, yet there is this peculiar in Pride, that 'tis hated beyond the proportion of its Sin-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 311

Sinfulness. It is indeed hated, not only as a Sin, but as an *Incivility*, as an Uncomplaisance, as something that opposes and hinders, and stands in the way, as that which crosses and contradicts the great Interest of *Self-love*, the most governing, though the most corrupt, Passion of Human Nature. For the great Interest and Design of *Self-love*, is to advance it self, and to greaten it self, to distinguish it self from others, and to exalt it self above others, contrary to the Character which *St. Paul* gives of Charity, that it *seeketh not her own*. But now to this, Pride is the most perfect contradiction, as professedly carrying on the same *Rival* design. And so whereas other Sinners, as Libertines and Debauchees are partly censured, and partly pitied, as Enemies chiefly to themselves, the Proud Man meets with pure and unallay'd Hatred, and is look'd upon as a Public Enemy. Pride is the only Sin perhaps which no body makes any allowance for, or thinks to excuse. Not but that there is a partiality in this, there being other Sins that may be equally hateful in themselves, and to which we have less Temptation. But 'tis *Partiality* that makes the difference. For whereas other Sins offend our Reason only, this also offends our Interest, and there is a Party even in the *corrupt* Nature of Man that fights against it. And so 'tis every way, and on all sides condemn'd.

312 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Humility hates it as a Sin, and Pride hates it as a Competitor.

17. But the worst circumstance of the Odiousness of Pride is, that *God* hates it. Even a *Proud look*, which is but a Symptom of this malignant Disease, is reckoned among the things which God hates. How much more then does he hate Pride it self! And therefore says *Solomon*, *every one that is Proud in heart*, (that is, in whose Heart Pride reigns) *is an abomination to the Lord*, *Prov. 16. 5.* And this his Hatred of Pride, he shews by the Opposition which he makes against it. Other Sinners he permits to prosper in their Wickedness, and to reap the fruits (such as they are) of their Evil Counsels. But he crosses, defeats, and frustrates the Proud, and disappoints them of that Glory and Applause which they project to themselves, confounds their Devices, and will not suffer these vain *Builders* to erect their *Babel*. And thus he *scatters* the Proud in the imagination of their Hearts, *Luke 1. 51.* that is, scatters the imaginations of the Proud, perplexes their Schemes, disturbs their Politics, breaks their Measures, sets those things far *asunder* which they had *united* in one System, and so disperses the broken pieces of it that they can never put them together again. And by this he turns their Wisdom into Folly, their imaginary Greatness into Contempt, and their
Glory

A Treatise concerning Humility. 313

Glory into Shame, so over-ruling their Counsels in his Wise Government of the World, as to make all turn to *his*, not to *their* Praise. And accordingly God is twice said to *resist* the Proud, *James* 4. 6. & *Pet.* 5. 5. And the word in both places is the same (*ἀντιτάττει*) and of a military Importance, implying that God does as it were set himself, as in Battle array, against the Proud Man to beat him down and subdue him, in the same proportion as he endeavours to exalt himself. He fights against him as against an Adversary, because he disputes with him the rights of his Prerogative, as invading that Glory and Honour which is solely due to the great Majesty of Heaven, and which he neither will nor can give to another. God is jealous of his Glory as of an unalienable Right; and if therefore he makes War against the Proud Man, as an usurping Invader of it, 'tis no wonder, since while other Sinners are their *own* Enemies, a Proud Man is *God's*.

18. And thus is Pride hated both by God and Man. And if I should say *despised* too, I should not say either more than is, or more than ought to be; for 'tis certain that there is folly enough in Pride, to render it a just and most fit Object of Contempt. There is indeed a folly in all Sin, not only as 'tis an absurd, an unreasonable Act, contrary to the true Interest and Advantage of

314 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

of him that does it, but also as 'tis the Creature of Ignorance and Mistake, the Issue of an erroneous Judgment, and an abused Understanding. For Evil as Evil not being eligible, 'tis necessary that whatever a Man wills, should appear good to him when he wills it. And consequently, even Sin as great an Evil at it is, must by him that wills it be apprehended as a good. I do not mean that he must think it to be *Lawful*, or Morally good, but good at large, or fit to be chosen; the best thing he can do at that time, all things considered. 'Tis not necessary he should think so before, nor is it necessary he should think so afterwards; but at the instant that he commits it he must so think of it, or else 'tis impossible he should commit it. But now it being impossible that the greatest Evil, as Sin is, should ever be good, or in any supposition become eligible, the Thought that it is so, is a *false Thought*, and so there is a *folly* in all Sin. But yet however, in no Sin so much as in Pride. For the folly of other Sins is our mistake, or misapprehension, concerning something that is without our selves, concerning the true Good and the true Evil of Man, in thinking that to be our Good which is our Evil, and that to be our Evil which is our Good. But now the folly of Pride, besides that it has that too, is also our mistaking our own *selves*, whom of all things

A Treatise concerning Humility. 315

things we have the best opportunity as well as the greatest concern to know. 'Tis not the ignorance of Stars or Planets, or far distant Worlds, but 'tis a Domestic ignorance, the ignorance of our selves, and of what passes within our own Breast, into which we may look without a *Telescope*. 'Tis to be strangers at home, and utterly unacquainted with our own state and condition, in thinking our selves to be something when we are indeed nothing ; a very wide mistake, and which of all follies seems to deserve the greatest Contempt.

19. And what it deserves it generally has ; the World is not at all unjust to its Merit, but pays it its due Contempt, the Proud Man of all Fools being the most ridiculous. We do not use to ridicule Men for their natural Infirmities, which are rather the Objects of our Pity than of our Scorn. No Man is, or at least ought to be, despised for his want of Sense, or for his want of Riches, for his Ignorance, or for his Poverty. But if an ignorant Man shall think himself Wise or Learned, or if a Poor Man shall *dream* of his being Rich, and so talk of his Farms and Manours in his *Sheep*, then 'tis that he makes a *Comedy* of himself ; and though I do not despise the real Ignorance of the one, or the real Poverty of the other, yet I cannot but despise the conceited pretending Fool in both.

Indeed

316 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Indeed Pride makes Men ridiculous and contemptible to the last degree ; but the worst circumstance again of its contempt is, that *God* despises it. He that pities our other Follies and Infirmities, as considering our frame, and knowing that we are but Dust, despises our Pride. For so says the *Psalmist*, *Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly : but as for the Proud he knoweth, or beholdeth them afar off*, *Psal.* 138. 6. Looks upon them, as they use to do upon others, with contempt and disdain.

20. But of all sorts of Pride, there is none that has more folly in it, and less foundation in reason and good sense, than to be Proud of being *Rich* ; that which we commonly call *Purse-proud*. For to be Proud of any thing, is as I apprehend, to think highly of our *selves* for having that thing. But now there is no reason to think highly of our selves for that which adds nothing to us, and which if it did, yet is not our own, but something which we have receiv'd, and are indebted for. Upon which last account, we have no reason to be Proud of any thing as was before observ'd, and that because every thing is *receiv'd*, but yet still of those things least which are least our own, and which in themselves are least valuable ; it being the *value* of the thing, and the *property* we have in it, upon which all pretence for Pride is grounded. But now in
Riches

A Treatise concerning Humility. 317

Riches there is neither of these. They add no real Worth or Perfection to us ; and if they did, yet they are not our own, and that not only as *received*, in which large sense all things, even our very Beings may be said not to be our own, but in a more peculiar sense because they are things *without* us, and make no part or portion of us, in which sense there are some things that *are* our own. He that is Proud of Knowledge, Strength, Beauty, Health, &c. is Proud of something inherent in him, though not originally from him. And they are real and valuable Perfections in themselves, and such as make him the more perfect, though he be not the principle, but only the subject of them. But to be Proud of an *Estate*, is to be Proud of that which not only does not confer any perfection upon us, but which is perfectly Alien and Foreign to us. If a Man were to be Proud of any thing, it should be what the *Angels* were Proud of. They had no Mannours nor Bags of Money, but were Proud of their intellectual Endowments. To this there is some temptation ; and I must needs say that 'tis the Glory and Triumph of true Christian Humility to be able to resist it. But to be Proud of an *Estate* is nonsense. For what real Excellence or Perfection does that add to me ? It is no part of me, nor am I really the greater for it. No not even *civilly* greater. For every Man is
valuable

318 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

valuable according to his proper rank and degree, and not for his greater Wealth in the same degree. A Rich Cobler is still but a Cobler, and will take place accordingly. And if I am of the same civil degree with another Man, 'tis not his having more *Money* than I that will justly set him above me, or oblige me to look upon him as my Better. Nothing but superiority of *degree* does that. And if I were never so much Richer than I am, yet if my degree continued the same, I ought not to think one jot better of my self than I do now, nor should any Body else think the better of me. A noble Birth indeed may be something, and so is a good liberal Education, and a title of Honour, besides that 'tis derived from the civil fountain of it, is also supposed to be founded in Merit. But merely to be *Rich*, is a thing that neither supposes any worth, nor confers any. A Man is neither the wiser nor the better for it, nor any way the more worthy. He is only the more able to do good, and consequently the more obliged to it. But till he does it, he deserves no Commendation. And if he does *then*, it must be only for his good Will, not for his Ability, that not being any perfection inherent in himself, like the Skill of a Physician or a Surgeon, but only an outward advantage or opportunity, like that of a Physician's having a Patient under Cure in good
Wea-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 319

Weather, or at a seasonable time of the Year, which though it may turn to the benefit of the Patient, does yet add no real perfection to the Physician. The Case is much the same here; and therefore as there is not the least pretence for a Man's being Proud of a great Estate, or a full Purse, so if he be, he ought to be despised for a Fool; and 'tis pity he could not be *Begged* for one too.

21. And yet as little ground as there is in reason for this sort of Pride, there are no Men in the World to whom Pride is more incident than to *Rich* Men. Especially those who upon a sudden become so, who by some prosperous turn of their Affairs, or by their own dextrous Management of them, from a mean Condition, and what is the ordinary consequence of it, a mean and low Education, are advanced into the command of a plentiful fortune. These, though they have least reason to be Proud, since the meanness of their rise, and the fresh remembrance of it should qualifie the vanity of their Spirit, and make them bear their Prosperity modestly, may yet be observ'd to abound more in Pride, and to take more upon them than those who have much greater Estates in an Hereditary way of descent, with the addition perhaps of a *Title of Honour* into the Bargain. But indeed, though upstarts are generally the Proudest, yet Pride is the *ordinary* Companion
of

320 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

of Wealth, as being a Weed that naturally loves a rich Soil. And accordingly Rich Men are the Men whom the Apostle would have particularly caution'd and admonish'd against it. *Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not High-minded,* 1 Tim. 6. 17. which supposes that they are very apt to be so. Which perhaps may be one reason why our Saviour Christ represents it as so great a difficulty, even next to an *Impossibility*, for a Rich Man to be saved. Because they are so subject to Pride, which is so great an Enemy to all Goodness, and so great a Bar to Salvation. For indeed though there is nothing in Wealth that may justly raise a Man into a greater opinion of himself, or render him more deserving of true Honour or Esteem in the consideration of Wise Men, yet it has in it such an appearance of Greatness, and furnishes so many materials for Pride, that 'tis a hard matter for a Man to be possess'd of it without being lifted up with it. But then to see a Rich Man that has nothing else to recommend him but his Riches, neither Quality, nor Learning, nor Wisdom, nor Parts, nor Education, nor Breeding, nor so much as common *Manners*, nothing but pure naked *Sterling*, to grow Proud and Haughty upon a full Purse, and to look down with scorn upon those who are by far his Superiours in all those other more valuable

Qua-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 321

Qualifications, nothing certainly can be more ridiculous to see, nor many things harder to bear. And yet Rich Men are not the only Persons that are in fault for this. 'Tis the fault of others as well as theirs, of those who set up and Worship the *Golden Calf*, who by paying them that partial respect and difference which is not their due, nurse them up in their Pride, and confirm them in that vain Opinion which they have of themselves. For as long as they find so much respect in the World, 'tis no wonder that they think themselves worthy of it. Though if they have nothing else but *so much a year* to support that Opinion, they are most ridiculous.

22. But as ridiculous as Pride is, that there should be so much of it in the World is a sad Consideration. That a Vice that is so foolish, so odious, and so very sinful, should at the same time be so very common too, is what one cannot think of without a sensible concern. And yet so it is; it is a very common Vice, I think of all Vices the most common. Indeed I know not any that sticks so cleavingly to our Nature, and that so closely follows and pursues it through all its Circumstances and Conditions as this does. Other Vices have their certain Ages, their Professions, States of Life, their Sexes, yea and their very Climates, to which they are appropriate, and in which they reign. But this is a

322 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

universal unlimited Vice, that like *Death* makes no distinction of Age, Person or Condition, but runs through Human Nature, as if it were, not a Disease, but a Constituent part of it. Every Body is more or less tainted with it, and yet scarce any Body perceives it. 'Tis the *Pestilence that walketh in darkness*, *Psal.* 91. 6. and destroys in secret, and thousands fall and perish by it, without perceiving the stroke of their wound. 'Tis a Vice that hardly any body thinks to mend or repent of, not because they are insensible of the heinousness of it, but of their own concern in it. They own it to be a great fault, but cannot be persuaded that it is *theirs*. They see it well enough, and complain of it in others, but cannot see it in themselves. And so though the World be so all over full of Pride, yet the comfort is, 'tis still of *other* Mens Pride. But however, these *other* Men are almost *all* Men, and the World is full of that which scarce any body thinks he has.

23. But certainly never so full as *now*. All Iniquity indeed now abounds, but none so much as *Pride*. That and *Luxury* seem to be the two great National Characters of this Age. The great Science of good Eating and Drinking is now improved into a *Mystery*, wherein Men are to be puzzled more than entertained, and wherein the satisfying the natural Appetites of Hunger and Thirst is the
least

A Treatise concerning Humility. 323

least thing that is regarded. *Pleasure* is the thing propos'd ; and because there can be none without some Appetite, new ways are invented and contriv'd to make an Artificial one, when that which is Natural is either wanting or satisfied. They must have whets before they Eat, and lest that should not do, they must have the most studied and exquisite sauces when they eat, and if by the help of both these they should happen to eat too much, then they must have proper stomach Liquors to carry it off, and to create a new Appetite. So that Mens Lives seem to be a continued Circulation of Eating and preparing to Eat ; and the great intention of Cookery is to make Men Eat who have no mind to Eat, and to Eat on after the natural and reasonable ends of Eating are serv'd. However thus far it is only *Luxury*. But if you go a little further, you shall find that these two great Vices, like two great Rivers, join and run into one, and 'tis all but *Pride*. For Men Eat now not only for *Hunger* and *Pleasure*, those old fashion'd ends of Eating, but also for State and Magnificence, and the furniture of their Tables, like that of their Houses, is intended for an Ostentation of their Wealth, and to set out their Quality and high Living ; so that even their very *Luxury* is made to serve to their *Pride* and *Vanity*, as to the *Superiour Vice*.

324 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

24. How much there is of this now in the World, I converse not enough in it exactly to know, and it would be a Satyr upon the Age to tell. Only a Man must be out of the World, or asleep in it, not to observe that Pride is now grown to a monstrous height, even within these few years, and is still growing higher and spreading further. All ranks, degrees, and distinctions of Men are now confounded, and that Habit and Apparel which used to be a Mark of that Distinction, is now become so irregular and promiscuous a thing, as to signify nothing but the *Vanity* of him that wears it. Indeed from the different way of putting it on, or from the different Mien and Behaviour of the Person, one may make a shift to spell out who is the Gentleman, and who it is that would only be thought so, but there is hardly any bodies Quality to be known by their *Garb*, unless it be that here, as in *Heraldry*, the plainest Coat is generally the best. Every one affects to live high, to go fine, to appear great, to imitate great People, and to put on Quality, not regarding what their Degree is, but only what their Purfes can reach to, thinking that if they bestow no more upon themselves than what they can *pay* for, 'tis all well, and oftentimes going beyond that too, and even Beggaring themselves and their Families, not to say Injuring and Defrauding others, by the Debts
which

A Treatise concerning Humility. 325

which they contract in maintaining that high Living which the extravagance of their Pride puts them upon, and will not be contented without, whether they can afford it or no. In short, there seems to be a Spirit of Emulation among Men who shall appear greatest; and the World is upon the stretch and the strain in this vain Contention, without any other sense or shame of the Vice, but only that of being *excell'd* in it.

25. If Pride was ever so great, sure it was never so *general* as now, nor never so much among the Inferiour part of the World as now. For I must do the *Higher* that right as to say, that though there is too much of it every where, yet that the Pride of the Nation, that at least which is the Character of this Age, does not lie so much in the Nobility and Gentry, who (here and there an upstart excepted) are much as they used to be, as in those of the middle and lower rank, particularly the *Trading* part of the Nation, and *Country People*, who indeed are much otherwise, I mean a great deal Prouder than they used to be. And the lower you go, still the more Pride you will find. For even the Poor are as Proud in their way as any, and for ought I know the very Proudest of all. For though they don't shew it by their Habit and Port, or *Pride of Life*, (and a good reason why) yet they shew it as they can, by

326 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

the Language of their Humour and Temper. For there are none that are more captious and exceptious, more nice and difficult, and that must be treated with more Care, Caution and Observance. None that are more easily offended, or more hardly reconciled, that are more apt to take, or more backward to forgive a Slight or an Affront, or so much as a Neglect.

26. But this latter Observation, is perhaps what may be made at all times. That which more peculiarly concerns the present, is the far advanced and very surprizing Pride of the middle and lower ranks, especially in the greater Towns, who have been for some time treading upon the Heels of the Gentry, and are now got up to a strange degree of Pride and Vanity, affecting to live high, to eat nicely, and to appear great, to take state upon them, and to imitate the Manner, the Dress, the Behaviour, and the way of living of those, whose Birth and Quality gives them a fair right and title to a great many things which the other cannot imitate without an unpardonable Vanity. And lest their Pride should Dye with them, due Care is taken that their Children be brought up in the same vain way, (which is unhappily mistaken for Breeding and good Education) that so when they come hereafter to reap the fruits of their Parents Industry, and to inherit

A Treatise concerning Humility. 327

inherit a plentiful Estate, they may not want *Pride* to appear great and graceful in it. So little is the far greater ornament of a Meek and Quiet Spirit valued among Men, tho' in the sight of God of great Price.

27. This gives Occasion for a more general, and indeed very sad Reflection, and the more sad because it is so general, and that is to consider with what Care and Diligence, not to say Cost and Expence, Parents are wont to Nurse up their Children in *Pride* and *Vanity*; a Vice so sinful and odious, and of it self so very insinuating, and to which the Devil so peculiarly tempts, as knowing that he himself fell, and what he lost by it, and to which the bent of our corrupt Nature stands of it self so much disposed. Sure there needs no Art nor Pains to promote this Vice, to encourage a Weed that so naturally grows almost in every Soil, but a great deal to kill and mortify it. And yet by the conduct of the World in this Affair, one would think that *Pride* were the Vertue, and *Humility* the Vice. For sure, if *Pride* were never so great a Vertue, People could not well take more care than they now do to instill it into their Children, and to train them up in the Discipline of it. To which vicious and most destructive Management, nothing I fancy more contributes than that unhappy Notion just now hinted at, in
Y 4 taking

328 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

taking Pride, or at least those methods of Education which minister to it, for good Breeding. But besides that the best and truest Breeding is Humility, sure they have their Breeding at a very dear rate, if they must pay their *Vertue* for it,

28. But how two such chargeable and expensive Vices as *Pride* and *Luxury*, either of which is enough to impoverish those that have them, should come to meet together at such a season as this, is a Question that I know not well how to answer. It is indeed a very strange *Conjunction*, and I wish it may not be a *portending* one. Pride indeed and Fullness, which was the Character of *Sodom*, *Ezek.* 16. 49. make no very unsuitable mixture, it being as natural for Plenty to beget Pride, as it is for Pride to beget Poverty. But Pride and Emptiness do not do so well together; and one would think that we should have had Evacuations enough to bring down our Spirits, and to make us Humble, and that our Pride by this time might have been purged away among other things. But sometimes loss of Blood and other great Evacuations cause Fevers, and Nature when reduced to a very low Ebb recollects its forces, and makes some extraordinary efforts to exert it self, and so goes off with a dying flourish. I pray God this may not be our Case, and that these more than ordinary Exertions
OF

A Treatise concerning Humility. 329

of our Pride at this unseasonable time for it, may not be tokens of our approaching Ruin. For of that, if we believe *Solomon*, Pride is the forerunner, and I with those words of his may be considered by us, before they are verified in us ; *Pride goes before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall, Prov. 16. 18.*

C H A P.

C H A P. VIII.

Wherein some of the principal Remedies against Pride, or Means for the better attainment of Humility, are considered.

I. **P** R I D E though a great, is not an incurable Vice. It is great enough to need, but not so great as not to admit of a Remedy. Which is that very state and degree of Evil that serves to quicken and engage our Care and Diligence to be delivered from it. We do not use to apply Remedies either to slight Hurts, or to apparently mortal Wounds, to such as will be Cured without, or to such as will not be Cured with them, when a Remedy is either *needlefs* or in *Vain*. But when neither of these is the Case, then is the proper season to seek out for help, and to apply the means of Recovery. Now this is our State. The Devil's Pride is Incurable, both as to the Guilt, and as to the Power and Habit of it. As to the *Guilt*, for want of a Mediatour to make satisfaction for their Offence, since he that only could do it was pleased not to take upon him the Nature of Angels, but the Seed of *Abraham*.
And

A Treatise concerning Humility. 331

And as to the *Power*, by reason of his Malice and Obstinacy in Evil, arising not so much from the greatness of the Sin, as from the peculiar condition of his Nature and State, whereby he immoveably adheres to whatever he once chuses. In which re-

spect, the Fall as to * Angels is the same as Death is to Men, leaving them bound in a fix'd and permanent state, as in

** Hoc est Homi-
nibus Mors quod
Angelis Casus.
Aquinas.*

Chains of Darknes. But our Condition, Blessed be God, is far otherwise in both respects. The guilt of our Pride, as of our other Sins, is remissible by the Blood of Christ, and the power of it is Conquerable by his Grace, with the concurrence of our own sincere endeavours in the use of such proper Means as serve in subordination to it. The principal of which I shall now briefly consider.

2. In the first place then, the first and most general remedy against Pride, as indeed against all other Sin, I take to be *Consideration*, or the actual attending to what we Habitually know. For all Sin is from Ignorance as I shewed before, not habitual Ignorance, (for in that respect as Sin *may* be, so most of our Sins *are* against Knowledge) but actual Ignorance, that is, an Ignorance which we labour under at the instant when we act, the light of the Mind being then under an Eclipse, whereby

332 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

whereby we lose the view of certain Moral or Practical Truths which we habitually and in the general know well enough, but at that point or instant of time not having them in our sight, at least clearly and fully, we may for that Interval be said to be *ignorant* of them, and that though we have the knowledge of them in our *power*. Now this *actual* Ignorance proceeds from Inadvertency or Inconsideration, from our not applying our Attention to what we habitually know. For 'tis our not attending to our habitual Knowledge that makes us actually Ignorant, as 'tis our actual Ignorance that makes us Sin. And then again, this our Inconsideration, or not attending to what we habitually know, is from our Minds being at that time fill'd, engaged and divided by the force of the present Temptation, the strong impression of some sensible Good or Evil, which diverts our thought from the Consideration of those governing Truths (such as, that Sin is the greatest Evil) which regulate our Practice ; by the means of which Non-attention to them we become actually ignorant of them, and so act as foolishly as if we did not know them, as indeed for that time we do not. This seems to be the true rise and procedure of Sin, to which therefore the proper and most direct remedy, as striking at the very root of it, must be *Consideration*, or Attention

A Treatise concerning Humility. 333

tion to our habitual Light, the keeping it always in our View, and walking with our Eyes open and fix'd upon it, that so having our Light always with us we may not stumble, as our Saviour assures us that those who walk in the day do not. The proper remedy then against Pride, is *Consideration*. I do not yet say of *what*, but Consideration at large, as it implies a waking and recollected state of the Soul, a certain *presence* of *Mind*, as I may call it, whereby we have the actual use and command of our general Knowledge, in opposition to that Sleepy and Lethargic state of Soul, wherein we are apt ever now and then to let our Light go out and be benighted, to forget our selves, take a nod, and fall.

3. What is here said of Consideration, may also as truly and indeed more directly and immediately be said of *Knowledge*, which is the effect of it. For since Ignorance is the cause of Pride, and the remedy of any Distemper is that which is contrary to its Cause, it hence follows that one proper and direct remedy against Pride is *Knowledge*. Indeed the Apostle tells us that Knowledge *puffeth up*; and it is very true of some kinds of Knowledge, and of some degrees of Knowledge, and of so much common Experience informs us, those that know little being generally observ'd to be most Proud of their Knowledge.

But

334 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

But then the same experience will also inform us, that the proper method of Cure in this Case is not to take that little away, but to increase it, by adding more degrees of Knowledge to it. By which it plainly appears, that Knowledge does not properly puff up as *Knowledge*, but only as it partakes of Ignorance; that is, that 'tis not our knowing what we do, but our knowing no more than we do that puffs us up with Pride and Self-conceit. And that indeed is very right. 'Tis our knowing no more than we do, that is our *not* knowing, that is our *Ignorance*, that is the Cause of all the Pride that is in the World; and the way to make Men more Humble is to make them *Wiser*. But as for Knowledge it self as such, if that should directly tend to Pride, (for as for its doing so sometimes by Accident, that's another matter) I should be but ill imploy'd in endeavouring to write an instructive Treatise to inform People in the Nature, Reason, and Duties of Humility. But I hope I am about a Good and Christian Undertaking, and that I shall not contribute to any Man's Pride by making him *Wiser*, especially since we have a very Wise Man's word for it, that *with the lowly is wisdom*, *Prov. 11. 2.* The Connexion is mutual. For as Lowliness is a friend to Wisdom, so true Wisdom is a friend to Lowliness. It does not only consist with it,
but

A Treatise concerning Humility. 335

but promotes it, by helping to make him that has it the more Lowly. A half-light indeed is dangerous, perhaps more dangerous than to be quite in the Dark ; but a clear and thorough view of things, is one of the best Keys to open the door to Humility, and to shut it against Pride, which of all the works of Darkness can least indure the Light.

4. *Knowledge* then is a proper remedy against Pride, since that, as all other Sins, is the effect of Ignorance. But then if we consider further of *what* Ignorance, (since the remedy of any Distemper is that which is contrary to its cause) this will suggest to us another rational method of Cure. For Pride more particularly is from the ignorance of our *selves* ; for the knowledge of our selves, is, as we have shewn, the foundation of Humility, and if we were otherwise never so ignorant, yet if we knew our selves, we should be Humble and not Proud ; as on the contrary, if we were otherwise never so Humanly or Naturally Wise, and yet knew not our selves, we should be Proud and not Humble. And therefore since our Pride is from the ignorance of our selves, it may be hence again collected that another proper and direct remedy against it, as striking at the cause of it, must be the *knowledge of our selves*. This therefore is the great Science, and the great Study, that we are to apply
our

336 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

our selves to, and to labour in, rightly and truly to understand our selves, to know what we are *in* our selves, and what we are *of* our selves, what our Nature is, and what our State and Condition is, what we are in relation to God, and what in relation to our Fellow-Creatures. Without this there is no being Humble, and with it there is no being Proud. And therefore, if after some Application of our selves to this great study we yet are so, we may conclude that we do not yet sufficiently know our selves. For the thorough Knowledge of our selves will lead us into a full Comprehension of our own *Nothing*, which will pluck up Pride by the very Roots, and plant Humility in its place. And upon this we may depend as a certain and infallible Remedy.

5. There are not many such in any Distemper, and except the Grace of God, I know not any other that is so in this. However, as those things are ordinarily call'd *Remedies* which have a natural tendency towards a Cure, though by being over-ruled by the obstinate and prevailing malignity of the Disease, they may become ineffectual as to this or that Case, or which serve to abate and qualifie the force and violence of the Distemper, though they do not always perfectly remove it ; so there are certain *assisting* Considerations, that may be very useful and serviceable

A Treatise concerning Humility. 337

viceable to us in helping us to tame and subdue our Pride, and to bring our Minds under the most excellent temper of true Christian Humility ; though I shall not so far act the Spiritual *Empiric*, as to warrant an infallible Cure.

6. Of these, the first is to consider frequently and attentively with our selves, the great *reasonableness* of Humility, how well it becomes us as Creatures, as sinful Creatures, as infirm and imperfect Creatures, and as obliged and indebted Creatures, that have received all our Good from the free and undeserv'd Bounty and Magnificence of our Creator. These were the four Pillars upon which the reasonableness of Humility was laid in the foregoing part of this Discourse, and as they sufficiently establish the Vertue in it self, so to fix and establish our selves in it, we should do well to consider them. But we may also consider the reasonableness of Humility *abstractly*, and in the general, that it is not a Duty laid upon us by the arbitrary Will and positive Command of God, but founded in the natural reason of the thing, and therefore imposed by him ; who as he acts nothing without reason himself, so he requires nothing from us but what is reasonable both for him to require, and for us to do. And this whole Consideration is very proper to fortifie us against Pride, and to

338 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

assist us in the practice of Humility. For since we are reasonable Creatures, and do in all things act by some reason or other, (for even when we act *against* reason, we have some reason for so acting) the most proper Motive or Perswasive for the doing any thing, must be the reasonableness of that thing. And therefore when St. *Paul*, who was in himself a very Rational, as well as an Inspired Writer, exhorts the *Romans* by the Mercies of God, to present their Bodies a living Sacrifice, Holy, Acceptable to God ; he does it by this Motive, that it was their *Reasonable Service*, *Rom.* 12. both as that signifies the Service of a reasonable Nature, in opposition to the dead and brute Sacrifices of the Law, and as it also signifies a Service that is agreeable to right reason, and founded in the Eternal and Immutable Rules of it, which the Legal Services were not, being in themselves Changeable, and now Abolish'd. Now Humility is this reasonable Service, the reason of it being founded in our very Natures, and therefore we would do well to set our selves to consider the great reason of it, and to fix and stay our Minds upon it, 'till we enter into the clearness and fullness of its Light, and come under a lively and convincing sense of its great Reasonableness, and then we shall find it no such easie thing to give way to Pride, (as much as our Natures are in-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 339

inclined to it) when we see so much plain reason to the contrary.

7. Again, another very assisting Consideration against Pride, will be to consider the great and transcending *Excellency* of Humility, as it discovers it self by those many good and happy Effects which it produces wherever it is, both in Private and in Public, both in our Selves and in the World. To consider how it calms and serenest the Regions of the Breast, and makes all quiet within, gives rest to our Minds when they labour, and ease to them when they are heavy laden. How it sweetens our Temper, and graces and adorns our Behaviour, and renders both that and our selves easie and acceptable to those who converse with us. What a *Key* it is to all useful and solid *Knowledge*, especially to that true Spiritual Wisdom which makes us wise unto Salvation, and how it qualifies us for further improvements in it, while in the mean time, the Proud Man holds up his Head too high to see his way, and so stumbles as much as if he were in the Dark. To consider also what a friend it is to Goodness, both as deriving a Value and an Excellency upon that Goodness which we have, whereof it is the Perfection and the Crown, and also as disposing us to endeavour after further degrees of it, from a sense of our little proficiency in it. To consider further

340 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

what a friend Humility is to true Contentment, and to that which is the best ground of it, Submission to God's Providence, and what an Irreconcilable Enemy Pride is to both. What a great Friend it is to Meekness, Patience, Order, Union, Government, Peace, true Christian Civility, Faith in the Divine Revelations, and to the great Vertue of *Obedience*, not only as it signifies the outward execution of the Work, but as to that which makes it a Vertue indeed, the Sacrifice of our Wills to God's Will, whereby our Duty becomes our Choice, and the doing it our Pleasure ; our *Meat* and *Drink* as our Saviour expresses it. But above all, how it disposes us for *Grace*, and tempers us for *Glory*, making us meet Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. These are a taste of the *fruits* of Humility, and by them we may judge of the goodness of the *Tree* ; and if we dwell in our secret Meditations upon these and such like Blessed Effects of it, 'tis much if it has not one good Effect more, and that is to reconcile us to a Vertue that shines with such a *Constellation* of Excellencies, and wherein the Happiness of Human Life is so much concern'd.

8. But to strengthen this Consideration, and to make it a more effectual Remedy against our Pride, it will be proper further to consider not only the Excellency, but the *Necessity*

A Treatise concerning Humility. 341

cessity of Humility ; that it does not only serve as a means to procure these good Effects, but that they cannot possibly be had without it ; that 'tis not only a sufficient, but a necessary Cause to produce them. That 'tis necessary both as a positive Injunction, and as a natural Qualification, necessary both to Goodness and to Happiness, both that of the present Life, and that of the Life to come. That without it we can neither be good Men nor good Christians, good Friends nor good Neighbours, good Governours nor good Subjects, good Masters nor good Servants, good Teachers nor good Scholars, nor indeed any thing else that is good. But that which is of most importance here to be consider'd, is its indispensable necessity to the final Happiness of Man ; that without it there is no possibility of going to Heaven, or enjoying the Felicities of it when we are there, where Humility shines as brightly as any Christian Vertue, and much the brighter for being in *Glory*. But now the necessity of a thing is the strongest and most pressing head of Argument we can use, and such as cannot fail of being effectual, supposing the end to be of moment, and that we thoroughly will and intend it. To learn to *Dance*, suppose, is necessary to make a Man *walk* well ; it may be so, but if I do not matter whether I walk well or no, this Argument will not persuade

342 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

me to learn to Dance. But *Eating* is necessary to *Life*, and *Life* is an end of moment, and which a Man may be supposed to will effectually ; and therefore setting aside the natural Inclination of Hunger, when a Man shall be told that Eating is absolutely necessary to Life, I cannot but think that this would prove a very powerful inducement to make him Eat. But now Humility is as necessary to Life as Eating is, only to a much better and more lasting Life, the Life of Goodness, and the Life of Happiness ; and accordingly, I cannot but think the serious Consideration of this Necessity, to be another excellent Remedy against the prevailing Vice which so much needs it.

9. We shall throw in yet more weight into the same Scale, if we consider on the other side the great Sinfulness, Odiousness, and Folly of Pride, how ridiculous and contemptible it makes us, how much we our selves despise it and abhor it in other Men, how much condemn'd it is, even by those that are guilty of it, and how little excused, and less pardoned in the World ; those who would forgive a personal Injury or Wrong done to them, not forgiving our Pride. What an ill piece of Breeding it is, and how uneasie it makes us, both to our selves and others, to whom no sort of Vice is so troublesome and offensive as our Pride. In fine, how universally

A Treatise concerning Humility. 343

sally despised and hated it is both by God and Man, and how deservedly, by reason of the many bad Effects which it continually produces, (which having already mention'd, I need not here repeat) the chiefest of which is, that it puts us into a state of War and Hostility with God, indisposes us for his Grace, makes us too big for the strait Gate, and unfits us for filling the vacant Seats of the Angels, who were turn'd out of Heaven for their Pride, and must be succeeded by Humility.

10. These are such *Remedial* Considerations, as Naturally flow from the Principles of the foregoing Discourse, to which many others may be added, whereof I shall briefly touch upon a few, leaving the Reader for the rest, to his own Private Meditation, and to the wholesome Advices he may receive from Spiritual Books or Persons. The first of these that I shall here mention, is frequently to think upon our selves, and to take a nice and particular survey of our selves, and to ask our selves this plain Question ; What am I that I should be Proud, or what do I see in my self to be Proud of, or what have I that I have not received, or which I can fairly boast of, or glory in as Originally and Independently my own ? It may not be a little adviseable to be thus particular with our selves, in demanding the reasons of our

Z 4

Pride.

344 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Pride. For Pride is apt to cover it self in generals, and to buoy and bolster up it self by confuse and indistinct Representations of our own Worth and Excellencies ; and while things are in this involv'd state, the unreasonableness and unfairness of its Title is not so apparent. But 'tis but to enter into the Detail, and come to Particulars ; and then by seeing that we have no reason to be Proud of this, nor of that, we shall quickly find that we have no reason to be Proud at all, It is a Question we are apt to move as to others ; what does such a one see in himself to be Proud of ? If we would put the same Question to our selves, we should soon be satisfied how ungrounded our Pride is, and how little it has to say for it self.

II. Another adviseable Practice to this purpose, is frequently to think upon our *Infirmities*, not only that great and general Infirmary of our dependency upon God as to every moment of our Being, an Infirmary which belongs to us as *Creatures* at large, but also the more special Infirmities of Human Nature, that are incident to us as *Men*. And lest our Pride should be tempted to overlook these, as being natural and common to all, or to bury them in the croud of our personal Excellencies ; (a side of our selves, which gives us a more pleasing Scene of Contemplation) to proceed further, and turn the
Eye

A Treatise concerning Humility. 345

Eye of our Consideration upon our own *Personal* Infirmities in Particular. First upon those of our Bodies, as being most sensible and in view. For though the Perfections of our Bodies, such as Health, Beauty, Strength, &c. are no reasons why we should be Proud, as being *receiv'd* Endowments, yet the want of them is a proper Motive to a further Humility ; and accordingly our very Body, upon the account of the Infirmities it is subjected to by the Fall, is call'd the *Body of our Humiliation*, *Phil.* 3. 21. But especially is it so, if we are so unhappy as to be mark'd and distinguish'd by any extraordinary Bodily Defects, such as Deformity or Monstrosity. For though this be not a just reason why others should despise or ridicule us, because we are not our own Workmanship but God's, yet this is still a further reason to make us low in our own Eyes, lest by our Pride, we make our selves more Monstrous than we are. Then Secondly, as to the Infirmities of our *Minds*, we have here a larger and a more affecting Scene of Meditation, not only because of the greater Malignancy of the Distempers, but because of the greater nobleness of the part affected. And here, as in the opening of Wounds and Ulcers, not for the pleasure of the Inspection, but for the use which may be made of it, we can never be too curious and minute in
our

346 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

our Observations, in considering the great disorder of our Natures, the defects of our Understandings, the levity and instability of our Wills, and the irregularity of our Passions, with all those little Humours and Follies which we despise in others, and for which we should think as meanly of our selves, could we but behold these things in our selves, with the same Eye wherewith we observe them in others. How were it to be wish'd that Men would consider themselves more, and that our own Perfections, and other Mens Faults, did not take up so much of our View.

12. But among all the Infirmities of Human Nature, there is none perhaps whose Consideration may be so sensibly Humbling as that of *Death*, as being the greatest Humiliation of our Nature. Upon which account, as well as that it is a Punishment of Sin, it may be a good remedy against our Pride, as well as against our other Vices, frequently to think upon it ; and that not only as 'tis a state of the greatest Abasement and Dishonour, but as 'tis a *levelling* state, that makes all equal, mixes the Small and the Great, the High and the Low, the Rich and the Poor together, and lays the distressed Prisoners in the same common Bed of rest with the Kings and Counsellors of the Earth ; confounds all Titles and Distinctions, makes

one

A Treatise concerning Humility. 347

one Dust of the Noble and the Ignoble, the Emperour and the Slave, the Learned and the Ignorant, and reduces all to the same common state from whence they were taken; destroys and defaces Beauty, disperses and scatters Wealth, and draws a black Veil over all Human Greatness, all those Poms and Vanities which we renounce at our coming into the World, but never so effectually as at our going out of it. When our Sun that shone so Brightly, goes down in a Cloud of Sickness, and sets in Darkness and Obscurity, and our Escutcheons and Ensigns of Honour that follow us to our Grave, there take a final leave of us; and we who fancied our Houses would continue for ever, and call'd our Lands after our own Names, must now be confined to a little Tenement of Clay, and be beholden to a kind Inscription, perhaps a flattering Epitaph, to mark out where that poor Tenement is. These are certainly very mortifying Thoughts, and such as may serve to deaden us to the World, and to all the relishes of a secular Life, but more especially to damp the flame of our Pride, in which we must be very much fix'd and hardened, if the consideration of that, which in a little time will lay our *Bodies* low in the Dust, will not in the mean while take down and humble our *Minds*.

348 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

13. But if it does not, let us to the Consideration of our Infirmities, add that of our *Sins* ; those unfruitful works of Darkness which we have wrought in our great Ignorance and Folly, without much satisfaction in the doing them, and to the infinite hazard and prejudice of our Souls. *Unfruitful*, not because they bring forth no fruit, that were happy indeed, but because their fruit is not such (neither so much nor so good) as the Sinner expects ; and also, because that fruit of Pleasure or Profit which Sin does bring forth, though it were answerable to our Expectations, yet it bears no proportion to the Price which we must pay for it, but costs us a great deal more than it is worth. So that they are unfruitful, because upon the whole ~~unprofitable~~ Works. Let us then turn our Eyes from our Excellencies, upon these unfruitful works of Darkness, whose Fruit is Vanity, and whose End is Misery, and upon our own great Folly in committing them, against so much reason, for so little advantage, and to the apparent hazard of our final Interest. Let us consider and recollect with our selves, how long we have walk'd in the *broad* way that leads to Destruction, and how many false steps we have made in the *narrow* one ; how many Imprudencies, how many Indiscretions, how many Oversights and Inadvertencies, how many Follies, how
many

A Treatise concerning Humility. 349

many Levities and Vanities, how many Sins of Infirmary of all sorts, besides abundance of revoltings and relapses into our old Sins, which have put us back again into the broad way of Ruin, and in danger of never returning again, nor taking hold of the Paths of Life. To be much in these Thoughts, would be very adviseable. For as the best use we can make of our Sins, is to be Humble for them ; so one of the best ways to make us Humble, is frequently to consider them. And among our Sins, our *Pride* in particular, as one of the greatest of them. For we may take very proper matter and occasion for Humility, even from Pride it self, as having a Folly as well as a Wickedness in it, beyond that of most Sins. It is perhaps the most senseless and foolish Sin that we commit, and the folly of it, setting aside its Wickedness, is enough to Humble us. It has this different and peculiar Property from all other Vices, that it is a reason against it self, since my very being Proud is a reason why I should not be Proud ; so that to cure it, we cannot do better than to reflect upon it.

This is what St. *Bernard* calls the killing *Goliath* with his own Sword.

*De David &
Golia. Sermo.*

Other Arguments and Considerations are like the Sling and the Stone, Weapons which we imploy at a distance ; but when we come so near as to draw from Pride it self an Argument

350 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

ment for Humility, then the formidable Champion falls by his own Weapon, of which it was also said, that there was *none like it*, 1 Sam. 21. 9.

14. To all this we may do well to add the Consideration of the great *Examples*, as of the Angels that fell by Pride, so of all Holy Men who have been most eminent for the Vertue of Humility. This Vertue indeed, as excellent as it is, has the fewest Examples of any to recommend it to our practice. Hardly any among the *Heathens*, and truly not very many among *Christians*. But some few we may read of, and some few we may by our own private observation here and there find ; and these we should do well to consider, and mark out for our Imitation. Especially those that are recorded in Holy Scripture, the examples of this Vertue, being perhaps more uncertain and liable to Deceit than of any other, and those being the only ones upon whose truth and reality we can securely depend. Such as in the first place that of the Prophet *David*, who appeals even to God himself concerning his Humility, and at the same time gives us an excellent Character of it in these words. *Lord my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty, neither do I exercise my self in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted my self as a Child that is weaned of his*

A Treatise concerning Humility. 351

his Mother : my Soul is even as a weaned Child, Psal. 131. The very same state and temper of Mind which the *Son of David* also commended to his Disciples, as a necessary Qualification for their entering into the Kingdom of Heaven, *Mat. 18. 3.* We may do well also to consider the great Humility of *John the Baptist*, which he discover'd not only by the vileness of his Apparel, and the poorness of his Diet, and the whole Conduct of his Self-denying and Mortified Life, but also by the plain and ingenuous Confession and Account that he gave of himself to those who were sent by the *Jews* to inquire of him who he was, in disclaiming the title of the *Messias*, of *Elias*, and of that Prophet which they expected, and taking to himself only the low Character of the *Voice* of one crying in the Wilderness, and chusing to Preach and Fulfil his Ministry in the *Wilderness* rather than in the Temple ; to make a difference (as may fairly be presumed) between the Servant and the Master of the House, whose Messenger and Forerunner he was, whom also he thought not himself worthy to Baptize, nor so much as to carry his Shoes. And yet he was a great Man, as great as any that was ever Born of a Woman, if we will believe our Saviour, a Prophet and more than a Prophet, and much the greater, because he was so Humble in his great-

352 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

greatness. Of which we have also a very Eminent and Bright Example in the Person and Character of St. Paul, whom neither his natural nor acquired Endowments, nor the supernatural and peculiar Graces and Favours of Heaven could tempt to Vanity, or exalt above Measure. But he continued Low even in the greatest Heights, poor in Spirit in the abundance of his Revelations, and preserv'd his Humility even where the Angels lost it.

Epist. 6. And therefore well might St. Cyprian say of him, *Qui post carcerem saepe repetitum, post flagella, post bestias, circa omnia mitis & humilis perseveravit. Nec post tertium Caelum & Paradisum quidquam sibi insolenter assumpsit.* Who after many Imprisonments, after Scourgings, after being exposed to Wild Beasts, persevered Meek and Humble in all things. Nor even after his being taken up into the third Heaven and Paradise, assumed any thing insolently to himself. This is a great Example of Humility, and such, as if well considered, may prove a good remedy against our Pride. And truly of all Examples that are purely Human, I know none greater than this, unless it be that of the Blessed Virgin, who certainly of all Creatures had the greatest Temptation to Pride, being the great Favourite of the Almighty, and told so by an Arch-Angel, and that she was to be Impregnated by the over-shadowings of the Holy

A Treatise concerning Humility. 353

Holy Ghost, and Dignified with the high Honour of being the Mother of the Son of God, the Saviour of the World. Favours too great for a Creature to deserve, and one would think, as much too great for a Creature to bear. And 'twas enough to invite the curiosity of the whole Creation to stand still, and observe how she would behave herself under them. She was not insensible of the incomparable Honour, yet not at all transported with it into any vain Complacencies, but *submits* to it rather as a Mysterious Dispensation which she could not tell how to comprehend, than Glories in it as a Privilege. *Behold the Handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word, Luke 1. 38.* And when her Cousin *Elizabeth*, by the Spirit of Prophecy, opens to her again the same Scene of Glory, she receives the Bright Revelation with Joy and with a Hymn of Gratitude, yet with no Vanity ; but instead of Magnifying her self, or her own Merits for such high Favours, she Magnifies God the free disposer of them. *My Soul doth Magnifie the Lord, and my Spirit hath rejoyced in God my Saviour, &c. ver. 46.* So fulfilling and practising (for an Example to all Christians) that great Apostolical Rule of Humility ; *He that glories, let him glory in the Lord, 1 Cor. 1. 31.*

354 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

15. But after all the greatest and most humbling Example of this kind, is that of the Incarnation, Birth, Life, Death and Passion of the Son of God, who, *though being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God; yet he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of Men; and being found in fashion as a Man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, as the Apostle expresses it, Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8.* This was an Example of Humility, fit to be match'd against the Angels Pride, and indeed such as *overmatch'd* it; it being infinitely more for God to condescend to assume the form of a Creature, than for a Creature to aspire to the likeness of God. And indeed such an Example of Humility we needed, as exceeded all the Instances of the Creatures Pride, to beat down and subdue our own, which could be only that of the *Divine Humility*, the Humility of God himself. And

† *Omnibus enim defuit Divina Humilitatis exemplum quod Opportunissimo tempore per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum illustratum est. Cui uni exemplo in cujusvis animo ferociter arrogantis, omnis superbia cedit, Et frangitur Et emoritur. Ad Dioscorum. Epist. 56.*

so † *St. Austin* calls it, the *Example of the Divine Humility*; and in the same place tells us, that it was wanting to the *Heathens*, and withal, that 'tis such an

A Treatise concerning Humility. 355

an Example of Humility, to which alone all our Pride must yield. And so indeed one would think, that *this* Example at least should prevail when all others fail'd; and that however the Incarnation of Christ might give offence to some of the Angels, according to the Opinion of those who suppose the Sin of the Devil to have been a refusal to be subject to Christ, when the Revelation was made to *him* and the other Angels of his Future Incarnation, yet that the most impudent Pride of *Man* should be put out of countenance to see his God Humble, and that even in the Cradle, much more upon the Cross. For what Humility is there like this, and what a Pride must that be which can resist it? Such to be sure as has no Shame or Modesty, to which it would be a sufficient rebuke to *need* such a remedy as this, much more to *withstand* the efficacy of it. Let us therefore consider this great Example, and withal, our great *Privilege* in it. The Angels that fell had no Sacrifice to atone for their Pride, and the *Pagan* World had no such Example as this to teach them Humility. But we have both; and it must be our own fault, if neither the Sin of our Pride be purged by the Sacrifice, nor the Power of it broken by the Example. It is by an unmeasurably odds the greatest in the World. *God manifest in the Flesh*: What a

356 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Mystery of Humility, as well as of Faith, is contained in those few words ! And accordingly, the Apostle sets it down as the first Branch of the great Mystery of *Godliness*. It is indeed a great thing ; and if we consider it as we ought, and as so great a thing deserves to be consider'd, it will prove as great a *Remedy*. A Remedy to cure our Pride, and a Means to procure that the same (*Humble*) Mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus. This great Example of Humility therefore we should always have before our Eyes, as a Preservative against the Worlds Pride, and the rather, because Christ himself commends it to us in those never to be forgotten words, *Learn of me, for I am Meek and Lowly in Heart.*

16. These are good *Christian* Considerations, every one of which will give our Pride a Wound ; but after all, it is the *Grace* of God that must mortify and kill it in us ; which therefore we should learn at all times to call upon God for by diligent Prayer, being sensible of our dependance upon him in all things, and that without his Grace we can do nothing ; which of it self again is another very *Humbling* Consideration. Not that we are to expect, that even the Grace of God will utterly extirpate our Pride, any more than any other Sin in this Life. No, our *Humility*, as well as our other Vertues, will
always

A Treatise concerning Humility. 357

always be imperfect here, and have some mixtures and allays of Pride in it. But the Grace of God will so far destroy the Dominion and the Power of it, that it may not reign in us, nor we deliberately yield up our selves to obey it in the Lusts thereof. Which is as full a conquest, as an Humble Christian can expect over this or any other Sin while he is in the Body of this Death. And as for those remainders of it, which with our other Infirmities still cleave and adhere to our corrupt Nature in this state of Imperfection, they shall be delivered over to be thoroughly purged, and finally abolished in the state of Glory, when we shall clearly and fully discern our selves to be *nothing*, and God to be all in all, the last and only perfect remedy against Pride. In the mean time, let us try what the Meditation of the greatest Example of Humility that ever was in the World, can do towards it.

C H A P. IX.

A

Devotional Meditation,

U P O N

The several degrees of the Divine Humiliation, in the Person of J E S U S C H R I S T.

HOW am I ashamed my Lord and my God, how am I ashamed of ~~my~~ Pride, when I think upon *thy* Humility ! Never was there any Love like thine, nor ever was there any Humility like thine. Love in coming into the World to save Sinners, and Humility in stooping so low to do it.

Which of these excellent Vertues was the greatest in thee, thou only who hadst them both in Perfection, can't perfectly tell. One of these *Deeps* calls upon the other, and they both call upon me for my devoutest
Wonder

A Treatise concerning Humility. 359

Wonder and Gratitude. But thy Charity appeared chiefly in *Dying* for us, whereas 'twas thy Humility even to *Live*.

How is my Pride put to the Blush, when I Contemplate thee the only Begotten of the Father, the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person ; his Coeternal and Consubstantial Son, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, the Eternal Word, the Second Person of the Blessed and All-glorious Trinity, the Infinite God, Condescending to unite thy self to a *Creature*, so as to become one Person with him, between whom and thee the distance is no less than Infinite. When at the same time, thy Vain-Glorious and Ambitious Creatures are affecting to be as God's. What Pride but theirs could ever aspire so high ? And what Humility but thine could ever descend so low ?

But thou descendest lower yet ; and how is my Pride further discountenanc'd when I see thee my Lord and my God chusing to unite thy self, not with an Angel or Archangel, but with Flesh and Blood. When I see thee refusing to take upon thee the Nature of Angels, (which yet had been an Humility greater than *their* Pride) and humbly taking upon thee the Inferiour Nature of Man. 'Twas

360 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

my Nature that thou wast pleased to Assume,
and *my* Pride that thou design'st to Humble.

And how can it but be Humbled, when I consider thee descending yet a lower step, in condescending to take our Nature, not as it shall be in a Beatified and Glorified State, with all the Privileges and Advantages of a Resurrection Body, but as it is now in this state of Mortality, with all its Infirmities of Hunger and Thirst, Sickness, Pain, Weariness, &c. Communicating with us in all things except *Sin*, and distinguishing thy self from us in nothing, but only by a more excellent Purity and Vertue.

But thou givest my Pride another Wound, when I further consider thy Infinite and Adorable Majesty assuming this infirm Mortal Nature of ours, even in its meanest Circumstances; and as if thou should'st not be Abased enough by becoming Man, choosing also to be a Mean, Poor, and Contemptible Man, yea, a Worm and no Man, the very scorn of Men, and the outcast of the People. Amazing Condescension! Human Nature in its best Condition had been infinitely below thy Majesty, but it seems it was ~~too~~ high for thy Humility.

But

A Treatise concerning Humility. 361

But let me stay a while in this low Valley, where thou Divine Shepherd of thy Church *Feedest*, where thou Reposest thy self, and Mortify my Pride upon this degree of thy Matchless Humiliation.

What a depth of Humility was it in thee my Lord and my God, when thou had'st it in thy power to be Born into the World at what time thou would'st, to chuse that season, which of all others is most hard, troublesome and uncomfortable. And how dost thou thereby reprove our niceness and tenderness !

What a depth of Humility was it in thee, who when thou mightest have been Born at what place thou would'st, wast yet pleased to be Born in the least of the Cities of *Judah*. How early dost thou begin to teach us thy Lesson of Humility, and to correct our Pride, even in the first moment of thy Life !

What a depth of Humility was it in thee, who when thou mightest have designed a Person of the highest Rank and Quality for the Honour of being thy Blessed Mother, wast yet pleased to be Born of a Poor obscure Virgin, Espoused to a Carpenter, and too Poor to offer a *Lamb* for her Purification. How dost thou rebuke the Pride of Birth, and
the

362 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

the Vanity of Pedigree, by thus regarding the low estate of thy Hand-Maid !

But how little dost thou regard thy *self*, when declining the Accommodations of Kings Houses, and Noble Mens Apartments, thou chusest to repair to an Inn, and because there was no room there for thee, (as there too often is not in such places) wast contented to take a Stable to be Born in, to be a Companion of Beasts, and to have this for the Sign of the Son of Man, *Thou shalt find the Babe wrapped in swaddling Cloaths, lying in a Manger.*

What a Temple hast thou prepared for the Sages of the East to Worship thee in with their Gifts and Oblations, or for Angels and Archangels, to offer thee their richer Presents of Adorations and Allelujahs ! But Poverty is no scandal to Wise Men or Angels ; and thy great Humility in submitting to it, does but make thee the more Adorable.

Let all the Idols of my Pride fall down before this amazing Scene of Abasement ; and since thou my King, and my God, art contented thus to Humble thy self, let me at length be ashamed to be Proud.

But

A Treatise concerning Humility. 363

But why great King of Glory, all this *Emptying*, all this Abasing of thy self ? What need any further Abasement than for God to become Man ? Why must the Lord of the World be also the meanest Person in it ? The Earth is the Lord's, and the fullness of it, and thou might'st have Carv'd to thy self what Portion thou pleas'd'st of Human Greatness ; and thou mightest have satisfied thy Father's Justice, and attoned for our Sins, in a great Condition as well as in a poor and low one. It is true. But thou could'st not then so decently have set up for a Professor of Humility, Poverty of Spirit, and Self-denial, nor so advantagiously have taught us those Divine Lessons, nor with so much becomingness have said, *Learn of me*. Nor could'st thou then have trod down and trampled upon the Pride of Human Nature, and the Vain Grandeur of the World, and laid all the Glory of it in the Dust.

But ~~now~~ how effectually dost thou do all these things ! And how dost thou now by this mean Appearance of thine, consecrate Poverty, illustrate Meanness and Obscurity, and give us not only in Notion and Discourse, a faint Copy, but even the very *Life* of Humility in thy own Person and Example ! And how dost thou now cheapen and beat down the Price of Human Greatness,
of

364 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

of all the Honours, Pleasures, and Wealth of the World, and Arraign and Condemn the folly of Men in placing their Happiness in these vain things. For what a Reproof, what an Overthrow, what a thorough Confutation is it of the Judgment of the World, to see thee, who knowest how to refuse the Evil and chuse the Good, to chuse Meanness and Poverty. Certainly either thou or they are mistaken. But *thy* Judgment is Infallible, and therefore 'tis they that are in the wrong, and that because they will not *learn* of thee.

But thou hast not yet done with my Pride, which is yet further Humbled when I consider thee the King of Glory, in the Humiliations of thy *Life* as well as of thy *Birth*. Others that are meanly Born, use all their Endeavour to raise and greaten themselves, and are oftentimes sooner great than they know how to bear their greatness. But thou who best could'st endure to be great, chusest to be little, and persevereest to lead thy Life in the same Meanness and Poverty where-with thou did'st begin it. Thus justifying thy first Choice, and by the daily Humiliation of thy Mortify'd and Self-denying Life continuing to reprove the Pride of the World.

Thus thou enterest into a *Course* and a *Diet* with us to Cure our Pride. For never

A Treatise concerning Humility. 365

ver, O thou compassionate restorer of Sick Nature, never could'st thou have a worse Disease to Cure, nor we a better Physician. And what a Pride must that be, which thou by thus Humbling thy self can'st not Cure.

Such is *mine* O Lord. I need thee within as well as without, I need thy Grace as well as thy Example. Thy Examples shames and confounds, but 'tis thy Grace that must Cure my Pride. Thy Example teaches me, but 'tis thy Grace that must dispose me to learn of thee. O thou that givest Grace to the Humble, give me Grace that I *may* be Humble.

But I have not done with thy Example yet, nor that with me, which further Wounds and Chastizes my Pride, when I consider my Lord and my God, submitting himself to be Circumcised and Obedient to the Law for Man, taking upon his spotless Innocence the Mark, the Character, the confusion of a Sinner ; and even putting himself to *Pain* to be numbered among the Transgressours. How dost thou hereby reprove our Religious Pride, who use Arts and Contrivances, and even take pains to appear better than we are.

But thou goest on in assaulting my Pride ; and how can it chuse but yield, when I see thee, Divine Infant, submitting thy self to
the

366 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

the Persecution of *Herod*, taking a troublesome Pilgrimage into *Egypt*, and only *flying* from him whom thou couldst have confounded with the breath of thy Mouth. How Early dost thou take up thy Cross, and how Humbly dost thou bear it ! Thou submittest thy self to be Persecuted by thy *Creatures*, and we can hardly endure Persecution for *thee*.

Such is the Pride of *our* Spirit, and such is the Humility of *thine*. Which again attacks my Pride when I see thee the Eternal Word, the Wisdom of thy Father and the Light of Men, and that givest pure Answers of Truth to them that rightly consult thee where thou teachest in the *School of the Breast*, condescending to dispute with the Doctors, to hear them, and to ask them Questions. What Humility was thine in hearing them of whom thou art the *Master*, and to ask them Questions, who ought to have inquired of thee !

What an Arrest again is it to my Pride, to see thee the Fountain of Living Water, the Refiner and Purifier of thy People, and who Baptizest them even with *Fire*, Humbly descending into the Waters, as if thou needest to be cleansed by them, and submitting thy self to be Baptized, not by an Angel, but by a Man and a Sinner. But thou wast willing
to

A Treatise concerning Humility. 367

to fulfil all Righteousness, and to shew us how much it is || fulfilled in Humility.

*|| In Ipsa Humilitate
ostendit impleri Justiti-
am. St. Austin. In
Evangel. Secundum Jo-
an. Sermo. 63.*

And what an excess of it was it for thee my Lord and God, whom all the Angels of God are commanded to Worship, to suffer thy self to be Tempted by the Devil, to condescend to receive and answer his impious Suggestions, and even to be transported by him in thy Sacred Person from Place to Place. How might the Proud Apostate see his own Pride shamed, upbraided and confounded in thy Humility. And what an Example had he now to teach it him, if 'twere possible for him ever to Learn ! But 'tis *his* Unhappiness that he *cannot*, and *ours* that we *will* not learn of thee.

But though we will not learn, yet thou continuest teaching thy excellent Lesson ; and how am I ashamed that I have not yet learnt it, when I see thee the Lord from Heaven submitting thy self in all Subjection to thy Earthly Parents, taking up thy mean Abode at poor despised *Nazareth*, and dwelling there for so many Years in Privacy and Obscurity, and afterwards, in the time of thy Manifestation to *Israel*, conversing with Publicans and Sinners, and contented to
be

368 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

be reckoned as a Friend to them, nay, even to be in confederacy with the Prince of the Devils.

When I see thee forlorn and destitute, and not having where to lay thy Head, Contemn'd of thy own Country-Men, Rejected by the brutish *Gadarenes*, forbidding thy Miracles to be Publish'd, and doing none but to serve the ends of Charity and Religion, paying Tribute purely to avoid Offence, though forced to work a Miracle to be able to do it, begging a draught of Water to quench thy thirst of the Woman of *Samaria*, and condescending to hold a Religious Conference with her, washing thy Disciples Feet, and riding in thy Humble Triumph into *Jerusalem* upon an Ass, and retiring into a Solitary Mountain to decline the Overture of a Royal Crown, as having no Ambition to wear any but one of *Thorns*.

When I see thee Lord of Heaven and Earth, and great Judge of Quick and Dead, submitting thy self to be basely Betrayed by *Judas*, to be Seized and Apprehended by the Soldiers, and to be by them Bound as a Malefactor, and with a thousand execrable Abuses and Indignities, Arraigned, Accused and Condemned to the most Accursed Death, the Death of the Cross ; and even
con-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 369

condescending to *bear* that Cross of thine towards the place of Crucifixion, where fainting under it, thou yet woundest our Pride, as well as callest for our Pity.

But now sure it is enough. It is now time for thy Legions of Angels to break in for thy Deliverance, or rather for thee to rescue thy self, for thy Divinity to succour thy Humanity. Thou hast indeed my Lord Humbled thy *self* enough, but thou hast not yet enough Humbled *me*. Thy Humility must Bleed and Dye to kill my Pride, as well as to atone for it. And so thou the Prince of Life, being found in fashion as a Man, continuest to Humble thy self to the uttermost, by becoming Obedient unto *Death*, even the Death of the *Cross*.

And now indeed it is finished, the great Example and Instruction of Humility is finished. It is finished in thee, and in thee Crucified. The Humility of thy Life is now made perfect in Death, and what was begun in the Stable, is now accomplish'd in the Cross.

There it is that I now Contemplate thee, O thou Divine Prophet, and now great Martyr of Humility ; there it is I Contemplate thee Humbly Exalted, and with open Arms, inviting all that are weary and heavy laden

B b

to

370 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

to come unto thee, promising them rest, but at the same time, exhorting them to take thy Yoke upon them, and to learn of thee to be Meek and Lowly in heart ; and withal, upbraiding us, that when thou art contented to be at so much pains to teach us, we will not be at some to *learn*.

Blessed Jesus, who hast Triumphed over our Pride by the Humility of thy Cross, join with the Triumphs of thy Cross the Victorious influence of thy *Grace*, to Kill and Mortify all Pride in us. And now thou art Ascended on High, and hast received Gifts for Men, give us the excellent Gift of *Humility*, that we being like minded with thee, and following thee in the steps of thy Humble Life, may hereafter have a part in the Exaltations of thy Glory, *Amen*.

C H A P.

C H A P. X.

*A Concluding Exhortation, to the Study and
Practice of true Christian Humility.*

1. **I** F ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them, *John* 13. 17. said our Blessed Lord to his Disciples, when he most humbly condescended to wash their Feet ; thereby intimating, that those words of his Imported not only a general Truth, but were to be understood with relation to *Humility* in particular, that 'tis not the knowing what to practice, but the practicing what we know of that great Christian Vertue that is to make us Happy. And therefore having by God's Assistance, gone through the several stages of this undertaking, and offer'd what I think sufficient, to let in a competent Light into the Rational and Instructive part of it, I shall now conclude all with a *Word of Exhortation*, that so that great Christian Vertue, which has hitherto been the Subject of our Meditation and Discourse, may now by the assistance of the Divine Grace, become the Subject of our Pious and Conscientious Practice.

372 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

2. One great reason why Men make so little progress in Goodness as they do, and why, while Arts and Sciences, Trades and Professions are improved, and continually improving, *Religion* alone stands at a stay, is because they do not *exercise* themselves in it as they do in those other things, do not make it their Business and their Study, but only a By-work, a matter of mere form and decency, something for fashions sake, something to satisfy the World, and procure a fair Character in it, something to still the clamours of their Consciences, which will not be satisfied with just *nothing*, something to come in now and then in its turn, to fill up a Vacancy, and to serve to help off some of those leisure hours which they know not well how otherwise to employ. But they do not apply themselves to it as to a Study, as to a Work or Profession, whereof they mean to make themselves Masters; they do not *Exercise themselves unto Godliness*, as the Apostle speaks, *1 Tim. 4. 8. Do not meditate on these things, nor give themselves wholly to them, ver. 15.* For if they did, their Improvements would Answer to their Diligence, in this as well as in other matters, and *their profiting*, as the Apostle there speaks, would *appear unto all Men.*

3. That

A Treatise concerning Humility. 373

3. That which is here observ'd of Religion in general, is in an eminent manner true of *Humility*. The reason why Men profit and advance so little in this great Christian Virtue, is because they don't apply themselves to the practice of it, and perhaps not so much to the practice of this as of other Christian Vertues ; either because they are not so sensible of its necessity, or because their Pride persuades them that they have already a competent share of it, and so need not endeavour after a greater, (which Pride is more apt to do in this than in any other Virtue, because it is most contrary to it self, and its own Interest) or because it is against the inclination of their corrupt Nature (which delights in magnifying, and not in lessening it self) to be employed in so degrading a Work. However it comes to pass, the study and practice of this great Virtue, is under a great and a general, I fear I may say, a *peculiar Neglect*, being not so regarded as it ought, even by those who have a sense of Religion, and seem to make conscience of all other Christian Duties. But here they allow themselves great Liberties, and seem so indifferently concern'd about this Duty, whether they keep within the Bounds of it or no, as if it were hardly any part of the *practice of Piety*. And therefore as all Christians are to be Exhorted as to Religion in general, to apply

374 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

themselves to the practice and exercise of being Good and Vertuous, and above all things to take care of their *Minds*, and to think that nothing belonging to them, deserves their care so much as themselves : (according to the Exhortation which *Socrates* in *Plato's Apology*, used to make to his Country-Men the *Athenians*) So as to *Humility* in particular, they are to be in an especial manner admonish'd, exhorted and stirred up, to use all diligence to cultivate that neglected Virtue, and to improve themselves in it, to be always watching against every motion of Pride, and always upon their Guard against that insidious Enemy, and to be as careful to bring themselves down in their own Opinion of themselves, as they used to be to raise themselves in the Opinions of others, to cloath themselves with Humility, instead of the vain and immodest Attire of the Age, and to put the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit ; which however it may be neglected and disregarded by Men, is yet in the sight of God of great Price.

4. This therefore is the great Practice, that Christians are to be exhorted and call'd upon to exercise themselves in, partly, because of their being so much wanting in it, and partly, because of the great Benefit and Advantage that would redound to them from such a practice,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 375

practice, towards the *attainment* of this excellent Vertue, as well as for the sake of the great excellency of the Vertue it self. Upon these Considerations, it is a very fit subject for a Christian Exhortation, and it were to be wish'd, that those who are intrusted by the Church with the care and charge of Souls, to instruct them in their Christian Duty, and to incite them to a diligent practice of it, would more frequently insist upon the great Christian Duty of *Humility*, both in their Public and Private Discourses and Exhortations, than they generally do. It would, I am persuaded, be as wholesom a Diet as they could feed the flock of God with, and would be more useful to the purposes of true Spiritual Edification, than a great many other things to which that unhappily mistaken word is by some applied. Besides, that there is no one Vertue in all Christianity, wherein People (*common* People especially) are so defective as in this, or which at the same time, is more necessary for them to have. So that an Exhortation to Humility must needs be at all times (especially in the Proud Age we now live in) a very Seasonable, and a very *Christian Address*.

5. And as at all times, so to all Men, because all Men have a great deal of Pride in them, and they generally most who think

376 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

they have least. But particularly Rich Men, Learned Men, and Great Men of all sorts are to be caution'd against Pride, and exhorted to the study and practice of Christian Humility. Not only because of the danger of their station, and the great temptation they are under of being Proud, but also because of the peculiar gracefulness and becomingness of Humility in a high station, the ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit being no where so much an ornament as there. The Cloathing of Humility, does as it were conform it self to the size of the Wearer, so as to appear always greatest in great Men. For as Pride is never so odious as in a mean and low Condition, because there is the least temptation to it, (a Circumstance that very much aggravates the Pride of all poor People) so Humility for the contrary reason, never shines so Brightly as from a high Sphere. A high Mind in a low Condition, is the very *Abomination of Desolation standing where it ought not.* Ill in it self, but the worse, because out of its place. And so a low Mind in a high Condition is a kind of *Beauty of Holiness*, having to its own Native Beauty, another added from the advantage of its Situation. St. Bernard tells Pope Eugen, that there was not in all his Pontifical Habit, a more Splendid Jewel than Humility. And indeed it

De Consideratione.
Lib. 2.

A Treatise concerning Humility. 377

it would be a strange Incongruity, if he that pretends to be the Successor of that Apostle, who with a passionate earnestness, humbly beg'd *him* whom he passionately loved to depart from him as a vile Sinner, who could not without threatening be persuaded to admit him to wash his Feet, who would not accept of Expressions of more than ordinary Honour and Reverence from *Cornelius*, and who thought himself not worthy, even to suffer in the same posture with his Master, and so was Crucified with his Head downwards, laying it low in the Lap of Humility, I say it would be strange, if he that pretends to be the *Successor* of him who was so Humble, and the *Vicar* of Christ, who was Humility it self, should forget to put on the Jewel of Humility among his other Pontifical Ornaments, which would so much outshine them all. He certainly of all Persons upon Earth ought to think himself concern'd to be Humble and Poor in Spirit. And so in their proportion, ought all other great Persons; and the greater they are, still the more Humble should they be, as on the other hand, the more Humble they are, the more they will increase and shine in their Greatness. Which is all nothing without Humility, even as it is with *goodness*. For Humility is the best Greatness, a Greatness that makes them greater than *themselves*; whereas the greatness of their Quality or Condition

378 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

dition does but set them a little above *others*. Great Men therefore have a particular concern and interest in the Obligations of a Virtue which their Greatness so much indangers, and which so well becomes and adorns their Greatness. But Humility is a general Duty, and the Exhortation to it must be Addressed more at large.

6. Now in order to this, besides all that has been already said to this purpose, the whole foregoing Treatise being a prosecution of this design, let us further consider in the first place, the Import and Designation of that Sacred and Honourable Name whereby we are called. We call our selves *Christians*, that is, the Disciples or Scholars of our great Master and Teacher Jesus Christ, as the *Jews* were said to be the Disciples of *Moses*, as acknowledging him for their Master and Teacher; *we are Moses his Disciples*, *John* 9. 28. But now, how are we Disciples or Scholars of Christ, if we do not receive the Instructions of his School, if we do not learn what he teaches, especially considering that to be a Disciple, is properly to be a *Learner*. But now that which he professedly teaches, and calls upon us to learn, is *Humility*. Learn of me says this Divine Teacher, this Heavenly Professor, for I am Meek and Lowly in Heart. That is his Lesson, and perhaps his
only.

A Treatise concerning Humility. 379

only. In the Schools of the World some profess Natural Philosophy, some Physic, some Geometry, some Law, &c. But in the School of Christ, the great thing profess'd, the great thing taught, and the great thing to be studied and learnt, is *Humility*. And if we do not learn this, whatever we learn besides, yet if we do not learn *this*, which he calls upon us so particularly to learn of him, how are we his Disciples, and with what face can we take upon us the name of Christians? The very title of Christians obliges us to the study and practice of Humility, and then are we Christ's Disciples indeed, when we learn of him to be Meek and Lowly in Heart. Otherwise we are so only in Name. And therefore let us consider our Title, Character, and Profession, what it imports, and what it obliges us to, and set our selves, with all diligence, to learn this great Lesson of Humility which our Divine Master teaches us, considering the great disagreement, of being a haughty Scholar of so Humble a Master; and that there cannot be a greater Contradiction in *Nature*, than a *Proud Christian* is in *Religion*.

7. To this purpose we may further consider, that our Saviour Christ, though he was a most perfect and shining Example of all Goodness and Vertue, as became him who
was

380 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

was the Light of the World, whom whoever follows, should not walk in Darknes, yet when he professedly offers to propose himself as an Example for us to imitate, he thought fit to do it only as to the two great Vertues of *Meekness* and *Humility*, which he singles out from all the rest, recommending them to our Practice, and himself for them to our Imitation. Whether it was because of some peculiar excellency in these Vertues, or because they were most eminently conspicuous in himself, or because they were most wanting in us, being such to which our Nature stands most remarkably averse, or (which seems most reasonable, because most agreeable to the Context) because these are the Vertues which do chiefly contribute to that *Rest* and inward *Quiet*, which our Saviour had before promised to them that should come to him, I shall not here dispute or determin. But so it stands in Fact. And 'tis enough for us, that he that was the Wisdom of God, has thought fit to pitch upon these two Vertues to exemplify himself by ; and there must be something extraordinary in them to recommend them to his Wise and Unerring Choice for that purpose. For which reason also he is pleased to call them his *Yoke*. Let us therefore be persuaded to take this Yoke of his upon us, a Yoke whose Burthen is *Rest*, and follow the steps of our Divine

A Treatise concerning Humility: 381

vine Leader, in the sweet and safe Paths of Humility and Meekness ; for which we have not only his Example, (for so we have also for all other Vertues) but also his peculiar recommendation and direction, in that he commends himself to our imitation, and exhorts us to take Example by him, in the practice of these two Christian Vertues above all the rest.

8. Which we shall be the more willing to do if we consider further, that Humility enters in a special manner into the *design* of *Christianity*, which in the very Foundation and Constitution of it, is a Religion that sets it self (as God the Author of it does) in a line of Battle as it were against Pride, against which as *St. Austin* observes, the whole Christian Discipline chiefly fights. *Contra superbiam maxime militat universa disciplina Christiana.*

De Sancta Virginitate. Cap. 31.

This will appear in the Ground and Foundation of our Religion, the Incarnation of the Son of God, one of the great Mysteries of the Christian Faith. God not only vastly Humbled himself by becoming Man, infinitely more than Men or Angels could ever do by the lowest Condescension ; nor was this amazing Humiliation of his only in its self a great and sovereign Medicine to cure our Pride, (for which reason, the Consideration

382 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

ration of it was before commended as one Remedy against it) but also *design'd* by the Wisdom of God to serve to that great end, to which it was of it self a most excellent means. And accordingly St.

De Tempore Ser-
mo 74. Cap. 7.

Austin says expressly, that Christ being God, was for this reason made Man, that Man might know himself to be Man. *Propter hoc, cum. Deus esset homo factus est, ut se homo hominem cognosceret.* Nay, he goes higher yet, telling us, that God so hated Pride, as to Humble himself against that only. *Quam sic odit Deus,*

De Sancta Virgi-
nitate. Cap. 40.

ut contra hanc unam se tantum humiliaret altissimus. And therefore, since the Son of God became Man on purpose to Humble our Pride, shall we, can we be so impudent as to continue in it? If so great an *Example* does not move us, yet at least, let us not contradict and defeat his *design*.

9. If it be said that the Incarnation of Christ was for the *Redemption* of the World, that he might have a Body prepared wherein to suffer, and to make an Offering and a Sacrifice for those Sins, which the blood of Bulls and Goats could not take away, it is indeed very true, that the Incarnation of Christ, and the same may be said of his Death and Passion, was for the end of our
Re-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 383

Redemption, but yet this does not exclude the other from partaking in the design. And though it would be Injurious to the undertaking of Christ, to say, that all that he did and suffer'd for us was only for an *Example*; yet that there was a regard had to that too, is most certain, or else I do not see how St. Peter could say that *Christ suffer'd for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps*, 1 Pet. 2. 21. And in what is it reasonable to think it was intended we should follow him, if not in that Humility, Meekness and Patience, wherewith he underwent his Sufferings.

10. But to make this matter clearer, we must distinguish between the Incarnation it self absolutely consider'd, as to the substance of the thing, and the Circumstances that attended it. That Christ should take our Nature upon him, was indeed necessary to make satisfaction for our Sins; and accordingly for that end design'd, though not excluding the other, but that he should take it upon him in that manner that he did, that he should make his Appearance in the World and his Passage through it in such a state of Meanness, Poverty and Contempt, this was no way Essential to his Satisfactory or Propitiatory design, but must be supposed to have its whole aim and direction upon some other end.

384 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

end. Which could be nothing else but to subdue and beat down Pride, and recommend Humility; the Credit of which, nothing could raise so much, as to see the Son of God *cloath'd* in all the circumstances of it.

11. Christ was Lord of the whole Earth, and might have been as great in it as he had pleased. And he might have satisfied for our Sins, in a great as well as in a low Condition. But he chose rather to *empty* himself; and lest his Incarnation alone should not be abasement enough, he chose not only to become Man, but to be a Poor, Abject, and Contemptible Man, to decline all that State and Grandeur which other Men so ambitiously court, and to embrace all that Meanness and Littleness which other Men, almost all Men, so studiously and so scornfully decline. Whether he or the World be in the right, I shall not inquire. 'Tis certain, that one of them must be in the wrong. *Aut iste fallitur, aut*

*In Natali Dom.
Sermo 3.*

Mundus errat, as St. Bernard says, either he is deceived, or the World errs; and let Piety judge which. But this was *his* Choice: He followed his own Rule when he came into the World, by chusing the *lowest Room* in it, even a Stable and a Manger, and all his other Life was answerable to this poor beginning. But now what was this for, but to trample upon the Great-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 385

Greatness and the Pride of the World, to shew the Vanity and Folly of it, to consecrate Poverty and a low Estate, and to leave the World such an Example of Humility, as was enough to cure the Pride of Men, and shame that of Angels? And accordingly 'tis observable that Christ is described by the Prophet, not only as coming in a way of Humility, but also in the very terms which he himself makes use of, when he exhorts us to learn that Vertue of him. *Tell ye the Daughter of Zion, behold thy King cometh unto thee lowly, and riding upon an Ass, and upon a Colt the Foal of an Ass.* A poor Procession for a King, were not Humility a greater Triumph than all the State and Magnificence of the World.

12. This mean Appearance of his gave great offence to the *Jews*, and God knew that it would. But yet he would not change his Wise Measures, to humour their unjust and unreasonable Prejudices. Had he appeared great, as by the figure which he made in their Prophecies the *Jews* imagined and expected that he would, there is no doubt but that they would have received him for their Messias. And God knew that too; but yet it seems he thought it more necessary that the Christian World should have an Example of Humility in his Son, than that that part of

386 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

the World should then turn Christian. And accordingly the manner of the Incarnation, and the circumstances of his whole Appearance in the World were so ordered, as not to comply with the carnal prejudices of the *Jews*, (and that though their reception of him for their Messias depended upon it) but to mortify and confound their Pride. Which if our Saviour had come in that Pompous manner as they expected, he would rather have nourished and confirmed. And then his Doctrine would have come too late, to correct that Pride which his Example had so much favour'd.

13. And thus the foundation of Christianity was laid in *Humility*. And was not the *Building* answerable to the Foundation? Yes, for what we have here observ'd of the *Incarnation* of Christ, the same may also be applied to the *Propagation* of the *Christian Faith*, and the *Erection* of the *Christian Church*, which was also so ordered in the manner and method of it, as to discountenance the Pride of the World, and to serve the Interest of Humility. I mean, in picking out and employing such weak and mean Instruments, Men of such low rank, and poor Abilities, for the undertaking and carrying on so vast a Work. This is what the Apostle takes notice of, and expresses in these rhetorical words.

Yon

A Treatise concerning Humility. 387

You see your calling, Brethren, how that not many wise Men after the Flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise. And God has chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty. And base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, 1 Cor. I. 26, 27, 28. And to signify that this Method was made choice of by the Wisdom of God, with a design of promoting Humility, he further adds, that no Flesh should glory in his presence, but that he that glories should glory in the Lord. And as was the Propagation of the Gospel, so also was the Conversion of Men to it; chiefly among the meaner and the simpler sort. And accordingly, our Saviour solemnly acknowledges and celebrates his Father's Wise Conduct, in revealing it to such. *I thank thee O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the Wise and Prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes, Mat. II. 25.* All which shews the true temper and spirit of Christianity, and how Humility enters into the design, and is interwoven with the very constitution of it; as also what great stress God lays upon this excellent Vertue, since the great Mystery of Godliness was so ordered in all its Circumstances, as to recom-

388 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

mend its Excellence, and promote its Practice.

14. Let us then comply with the design of our Holy Religion, and follow the great but humble Author of it in all Meekness, and Lowliness of Mind, and not suffer so strange an Incongruity, as while the Divinity empties it self, for Man to be puffed up with Pride. Let us take up his *Yoke*, as well as his *Cross*, and follow him in his own way, the way of his own chusing, and the way of his own prescribing; the low, quiet, and peaceable way of Humility. A way indeed where we have not many Leaders, and where we must not expect many Followers. But can we have a greater Example than that of the Son of God? And since we have one so *great*, let it be no Objection or Discouragement that we have not a great *many*. The greater is the shame, that so great an Example should have so few to follow it. Especially considering, that the Divine Example is not only infinitely greater than any other, but that 'tis much greater for God to be an Example to us of *Humility*, than of any other Vertue. That God should give us an example of Justice, or of Goodness, or of Mercy, or of Truth, &c. has nothing strange or surprizing in it. It would be strange if he did not. But that the High and Lofty one that inhabits Eternity
should

A Treatise concerning Humility. 389

should give us an Example of *Humility*, has something in it so extraordinary, and is a Consideration so full of Wonder and Amazement, that one would think the whole Pride of the Creature should fall down flat before it, and sink into the lowest Abyss of Self-Abasement. And indeed if this does not cure our Pride, what shall God do to Humble us?

15. But he need do no more, if we would well consider this, and apply our selves to the Study and Practice of this most excellent and truly Christian Vertue, with a Care and Diligence that bears any proportion to the importance of the thing, or to the concern which the Son of God has express'd to Instruct us in it, by his Precept, by his Example, and by the whole Dispensation and Oeconomy of his Religion. And this we have the more reason to do, if we consider further, the great difficulty of this excellent Vertue, and the great danger of the contrary Vice. Excellent things they say *are* difficult, but one would think, that to a reasonable Nature as ours is, nothing should be difficult that is reasonable. And so indeed it would be if Reason were the only Principle in us. But there is Passion, and Lust, and a strong Propension to sensible good as well as Reason, even that *other Law*, *Rom. 7. 23.* which the Apostle speaks and complains of, the Law in

390 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

the Members, which brings us into Captivity to the Law of Sin, and of no Sin so much as that of *Pride*.

16. For as our Nature is Corrupt, so Pride makes a great part of that Corruption. For Pride was the Sin of *Adam* as well as of the Apostate Angels, and accordingly, of that corrupt Nature which he has transmitted and conveyed to his posterity, it is the chief Ingredient. Which by the way seems to be one reason why the Son of God, who came to repair the ruins of our Nature, and to heal its Sickness (*Medicus Deus*, as St. *Austin* calls him) applied himself and the whole Institution of his Gospel so particularly to this Vice, as the Head and Ground of our Distemper. Indeed of all Vices, Pride is that to which Human Nature, in the state wherein it now is, stands most disposed, as appears by the extraordinary commonness of it ; for 'tis the great Inclination we have to it, that makes it so very common above other Sins. Besides, 'tis the most insidious and insinuating Vice of any in the World, the Sin that does *so easily beset us*, as the Apostle speaks ; that finds Admission, even where entrance is denied to other Sins, and that steals in oftentimes upon the best Natures and Tempers. A pregnant Instance whereof we have in the Angels that fell by it. For certainly, that must

A Treatise concerning Humility. 391

must needs be a very malignant and pestilential Disease, which could fix upon such pure and clean Constitutions as they had. And therefore we may well say with

St. Cyprian, *Quale malum est quo* *De Zelo & li-*
vore.
Angelus cecidit, quo circumveniri

& subverti alta illa & præclara sublimitas potuit, quo deceptus est ipse qui decepit. What an Evil is that by which the Angel fell, whereby that high and excellent Sublimity could be circumvented and subverted, whereby the Deceiver himself was deceived ! But this is not all. As 'tis the most insinuating Vice, that like the *subtil matter* penetrates and gets in almost every where, where nothing else can, even at the door of *Humility* it self ; so when 'tis once in, 'tis not only a hard matter to get it out again, but even to *find* it. So many Artifices, so many Disguises, so many Reserves, so many false Colours, so many fair and plausible Names it has ; such as Magnanimity, greatness of Spirit, point of Honour, setting a just value upon ones self, and the like ; whereby it imposes upon us, and conceals it self from our nicest Inquiries and most reflecting Observations ; that even those who not only have it, but are even Mortally Sick of it, are the most ignorant of it, and so Live and Dye in it, without knowing what manner of Spirit they are of, nor how much they resemble and partake

392 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

of his, who first began the Rebellion against God, and still Proudly continues in it. Besides, that 'tis of the very nature of Pride, and no more than what is pursuant to its general design, not to discover faults at *home*, where Blemishes and Defects are always cast into a shade, and only Excellencies and Perfections placed in View. This is the way of *Portraiture*, and by none so much used as by that flattering Painter *Self-love*. And to be sure that Vice which is so much for hiding our other faults, will not be wanting to hide it self. And that which is hard to be discovered, must be as hard to be Cured. All which shews what a difficult Vertue true Christian Humility is, how difficult to obtain, and how difficult to keep, and how dangerous, as well as how great an Evil Pride is, how difficult to prevent, and how difficult to cure ; and indeed, that to subdue and overcome our Pride, is the great work of our Christian Mortification and Self-denial. Other Sins are part of that Old Man in us which is to be *put off* ; but Pride is very Devil in us which is to be *dispossess'd*, and to do it, is a more than ordinary Atchievment of Grace. To which we must also join our own most vigorous Endeavours ; for *this kind goes not forth*, but with great severity of Disciplin. 'Tis a great work to do, and a great work done to subdue our Pride,

A Treatise concerning Humility. 393

17. But then since it is so, we should apply our selves to it with a diligence, and with an endeavour equal to its difficulty, and labour and contend against this Diabolic Vice, not lazily, faintly, and indifferently, as if we were willing to be overcome by it, and would only do somewhat that looks like resistance, but heartily, vigorously, and with our whole might, as we would oppose an Enemy that assaults our very Life, and as fully resolv'd by the Grace of God to overcome it. This indeed is necessary in our Contention against *all* Sin, and no degree of endeavour less than this, will either get us the Victory over it, or even shew that we desire it. But much more in a Sin that is so rivetted in our Nature, and to which the Bias of it so strongly inclines, and which consequently is so very hard, with all the force of both Reason and Religion to stand against, is this Care and Diligence, this Resolution and Endeavour necessary. And it reflects not a little both upon the Prudence and the Piety of Christians, that Men who are conscientious in the discharge of other Religious Duties, and cautious how they fall into other Sins, do not think themselves concern'd to be more upon their guard against a Vice whereby *Angels* fell, and to which the bent of *Human* Nature is so mightily inclined.

18. Indeed

394 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

18. Indeed it is a terrible Consideration, to think that we weak Creatures should have such an Inclination to that very thing, whereby the Angels, who are so much *greater in power and might*, as St. Peter speaks, fell, and to which they had no natural Inclination. The greater was their *Malice* for doing so, but the greater is our *danger*, and the greater ought to be our Care and Vigilance to decline it. And the rather, because the Devil may be reasonably presumed to imploy his Hellish Artifice to tempt and draw us into this Sin more than into any other, not only as sensible of the great heinousness of it, and how displeasing it is to God, and as having greater hopes of Success here, as knowing how difficult it must be for our Corrupt Nature to withstand a Vice, by which he himself in his intire Angelic Purity was Betrayed, but also as being willing that we should partake with him in his own Crime, become guilty of that Sin for which he himself was Condemn'd, and so *fall*, as St. Paul speaks, *into the condemnation of the Devil*, 1 Tim. 3. 6. who also for the same reason, may be supposed to rejoyce and take delight in our Pride more than in any other Sin, because then he sees his own Mark and Character upon us, which gives him a peculiar Right and Title to us, whereby he may challenge us for his. Which supplies us with a further reason, why
we

A Treatise concerning Humility. 395

we should be the more careful and diligent to keep our selves clear of *the great Transgression*, as the *Psalmist* speaks in *Psalm 18.* (which *St. Austin* interprets to be Pride) that our Enemy, who is for *learn of me* as well as Christ, may not rejoyce over us.

19. *St. Paul* gives this as a reason why we should take unto us, and put on the whole Armour of God ; arm our selves with all those Graces and Vertues, Means and Instruments which God has provided and appointed for our Spiritual defence, *because we wrestle not against Flesh and Blood*, mere Human Enemies, such as our selves, (which would be an equal match) *but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* And indeed, the Consideration that we have to do with an Enemy so every way superiour to our selves, whose spiritual Nature, Number, Power, Malice and Subtilty, give him so great an advantage against us, is a sufficient reason why we should look to our selves, and be wanting in no Provisions that may serve for our defence, that so we may make up in *Armour* what we want in *Strength.* But the Argument for this military Caution and Provision, holds yet more strongly here, where we have not only Principalities and Powers, *&c.* to wrestle with, but *Flesh and Blood.*

396 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Blood too, having the bent and inclination of our own corrupt Nature to contend with, as well as the Temptations of the Devil. And indeed the very Vice which he tempts us to, as well as himself, may very emphatically be said to be a *Spiritual Wickedness in high places*. And therefore here, if any where, we are eminently concern'd to *take unto us the whole Armour of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand*. Which indeed it is hard to do upon such slippery ground; but then the more slippery the ground is, the more circumspectly should we walk. And the rather, because we have here *Custom* to contend against as well as Nature, not only evil Habits and vicious Customs of our own, but the great Custom of the World, even that *Pride of Life* which St. John makes a *third* part in his Inventory of it.

20. We are to consider then, the great danger of the Vice we have to guard ourselves against, and the great difficulty of the Vertue that we have to practice. That Humility is not at all Natural to us as Pride is, but something that is to be acquired, something that is to be put on, something that is to be ingrafted upon the stock of our Nature, something that we are to be form'd to, and disciplin'd in, contrary to our natural Inclination.

A Treatise concerning Humility. 397

clination. All which our Saviour supposes in bidding us to *learn it*. We need not learn Pride, for that we are but too much disposed to by Nature, though by the general practice of the World (which seems a kind of *School* of it) one would think that that were to be *learnt* too. But Humility is a thing purely to be learnt, there being not the least ground or rudiment of that in our Nature. And a very hard Lesson too it is to learn, which our Saviour also supposes in sending us to learn it of no less a Master than himself. *Learn of me*. No other than himself; neither the Wise Men of Greece, nor the Doctors of the Synagogue, neither Angel, nor Saint, neither Apostle, nor Primitive Christian, nor Father of the Christian Church, no other but himself was fit to teach it. Nor were we capable of learning it of any other Master but himself, who besides the outward instruction of his Doctrine and great Example, might also inwardly dispose us by his *Grace*, to the practice of a Vertue so contrary to our Nature.

21. But then because the Lesson is so hard, as well as so very necessary to be learnt, it concerns us to gird up the loins of our Mind, to shake off all Sloth and Negligence, and apply our selves with the greater study and diligence to the learning of it. And let us
not

398 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

not depend upon the greatness of our *Master*. For though he be the greatest in the World, yet he teaches none but those who are teachable and willing to learn; and though he teaches never so excellently, yet we must do our own part too, and bring our endeavours as well as our selves to his School, or else we shall never be taught. And the more, because the Lesson is so hard. Easie things are taught and learnt with ease; and as there needs not then much study or pains, so there is no reason why we should bestow more pains when less will serve. But when things are hard, whether in speculation or in practice, there must be a great deal of Application used by the Scholar, as well as by the Master, or else we may be always learning, and yet never be Masters of what we learn. A Consideration which we may apply to the *Truths* of Religion, but which holds more eminently in the *Duties* of it, and in none more than in learning this hard Lesson of *Humility*.

22. But then again, since it is so hard a Lesson, (perhaps the very hardest that is to be learnt in the School of Christ) we should also take special care not to make it *harder*, by putting our selves under any disadvantage or indisposition for the learning of it. And therefore first of all, we should not (as is com-

A Treatise concerning Humility. 399

commonly done in difficult things) put off the learning of it as an ungrateful Task, from time to time, till it be late in the day with us, but begin early to set our selves to the learning of this great Lesson, not only because of the peculiar advantage that the Morning of Life, as well as the Morning of the Day, has for the Learning any thing, but also that we may have the more time to learn it in. Humility is not a Lesson to be learnt upon a Death-Bed, no, nor is the declining part of Life, when the Day is far spent and the Night is at hand, that Night wherein no Man can work, a proper time for the learning of it. Nor do many Men then learn it. I do not deny but that it may, by the special Grace of God, be then learnt; but though a Man were never so secure of his Life, I should not think it a convenient season, when Pride has been a long time growing, and has taken deep rooting in his heart, and he is fully settled and confirmed in the habit of it, then to begin to learn *Humility*. This is to make a hard work much harder, by our ill timing of it. Besides, that then we shall have a great deal less time to do it in, which again adds to the difficulty. And indeed to the *uncertainty* too; there being then a great deal of danger that the Night will come upon us before this our Christian Lesson be learnt, and that though we learn never so diligently.

Upon

400 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

Upon which accounts, 'tis most adviseable to apply our selves to the study and practice of Humility betimes ; besides, that the sooner we take this Yoke of Christ upon us, the easier it will sit upon our Necks, as well as be more easily put on.

23. But there is also another reason why we should be thus early in our Applications to the study and practice of Humility, and that is, because Youth is the natural and most dangerous season of Pride. And then is the time to be most upon our guard against it, when we are in greatest danger of being assaulted by it. But now that is in our *Youth*, which is as much the season of Pride as Old Age is of Covetousness. *Pride* and *Sensuality* are properly youthful Lusts, and the chiefest of them. 'Tis true indeed, that Pride which is sown in our Youth, will grow at any time of our Life in a soil that is so kindly for it, but never is it so apt to take root as then. And that because the knowledge of our selves, the true ground and foundation of Humility, is then but in a very low Ebb, and Ignorance, Folly, Inconsideration and want of Experience, the great Pillars and Supporters of Pride, are then in their high tide with us. And this makes Pride more incident to that Age, than to any part of our Lives. And so also Experience shews. Never
are

A Treatise concerning Humility. 401

are we so wise as then, never so learned as then, never so every way accomplish'd as then, never so agreeable to our selves, nor never so well opinion'd of our selves as then. And which is a consequence of this, never so confident and presuming, never so forward and undertaking as then. And accordingly 'tis remarkable, that among the Qualifications which *St. Paul* sets down for a *Bishop* this is one, that he should not be a *Novice*, one newly instructed in the Christian Faith; and the same reason holds also for a *Young Man*; and that *lest being lifted up with Pride, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 6. Humility therefore, though the common duty of all Christians, yet is the proper study of young Persons; and though 'tis a Lesson which we are to be always learning, and which the very nature of the thing it self will forbid us to think that we have ever sufficiently learnt, yet we should chiefly apply our selves to the study of it in the time of Youth, if 'twere only for this reason, because we are then most subject to the Impressions of Pride.

24. But the more to facilitate this hard Lesson of Humility, and to give us the more sure and easie conquest over the contrary Vice, the Sin that does so easily beset us, we should

402 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

among other things, remember not to neglect that common rule of *Spiritual Prudence* usually advised in other Cases, and that is to avoid the *Occasions*. Whether they are such as we may administer to our selves, by making too frequent use of our *Pocket Glass*, I mean, by dwelling too much upon the View of our own Excellencies and Perfections, and looking too long against our own *Hight*, comparing our selves with our selves, or with those who are below us, and considering too curiously the height upon which we stand, which is the ready way to turn our heads, and make us fall from it. Or whether they are such occasions as *others* may lay in our way by the Deference and Respect which they pay us, or by the Praises and Commendations which they too liberally bestow upon us ; not to say any thing of *Complements* and *Flatteries*, those soft oily Poisons which we incautiously draw in for common Breath, not considering how much our Humility is in danger'd by them. But these we should avoid as much as we can, and when we find we cannot avoid them, yet we should not regard them, but turn the deaf Ear to our Praises, and our Hearing one to those that will tell us of our Faults. But above all, we should avoid *Flatterers*, as those that hunt for our Life, lest they insensibly lead us by their in-
fidious

A Treatise concerning Humility. 403

fidious Inchantment, first into the *Snare*, and then into the *Condemnation* of the Devil.

25. Among these *Occasions*, we should also take care to avoid all such *Doctrines* and *Opinions*, as have any Natural tendency to beget or nourish Pride in us. In Divinity, chiefly the *Pelagian* Heresy. In Philosophy, the fond Presumption that this great Fabric of the Corporeal World, whereof we know, and whereof we are so inconsiderable a part, was made purely for *us*. As also all such Opinions which, either directly or by consequence, too much exalt the Power and Efficacy of *second Causes*, or which either deny or lessen our *dependence* upon God, either as to Being or Operation, in whom as the Apostle tells us, *we live, move, and have our Being*. Our dependence upon God, is one of the main things that distinguishes between him and us, the very innermost Character and most essential Property of a Creature, and one of the fundamental Pillars upon which our Humility rests, and therefore we should have a jealous Eye upon whatsoever any way tends to lessen that dependence, looking upon that as indeed *vain Philosophy* which tempts us to *Vanity*. And we have Pride enough in our *Hearts*; we need not have the grounds of it in our *Heads* too.

404 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

26. To conclude, our Divine Master, who came from Heaven on purpose to shew us the way thither, and who has opened a School upon Earth, to teach us what the several Sects of Philosophers never knew, has in great pity and compassion to our Infirmities, vouchsafed to prescribe us a Lesson, a Lesson of great Reason, of great Excellency, of great Necessity, and withal of great Difficulty ; and he calls upon us to learn it, and for our encouragement, promises that if we do learn it, we shall find *Rest* to our Souls; such a Rest as will more than recompense all the pains and labour we can be at in learning it, Tranquility of Mind here, and hereafter that *Rest* which remains to the People of God. For though there may be some difficulty in putting on this Yoke of Christ, yet when it is on, we shall find that it neither galls the Neck, nor oppresses the Shoulders, that there is no trouble nor weariness in it, but that his Yoke is easie and his Burthen is light. And the longer we wear this Yoke, and carry this Burthen of his, the easier and the lighter we shall find it, and the more *Rest* we shall find by it. And therefore let us not fear to take this Yoke of his upon us ; for if we fear his *Yoke*, what shall we say to his *Cross* ; and if we fear his *Cross*, what pretence have we to his *Crown* ? But whatever there may be

A Treatise concerning Humility. 405

be in a Cross, sure there is nothing dreadful in a *Yoke* ; and therefore let us take this Yoke of his upon us, and learn of him to be Meek and Lowly in Heart. We cannot learn a better Lesson, nor of a better Master, nor at a better time than this present *now*, and therefore let us forthwith apply our selves to the learning of it with all Diligence and Assiduity. Let our Eye and our Guard be against Pride, and every advance of it, as we would watch the motions of an Enemy ; and let it be part of our *Christian Diary*, of our *Daily Walk*, of our ordinary Disciplin, to learn and perfect our selves in Humility. Let us study Humility, exercise our selves unto Humility, and be always practising Humility. Let it be the first, and the middle, and the last thing with us ; in like manner as *Demosthenes* said of his *Pronunciation*. The World is a School of Pride, it is full of it, and of Temptations to it. But the School of Christ is a School of Humility ; and here it is that we profess our selves to be Scholars. Of him then let us learn who can best teach us ; and as he always teaches, so let us be always learning this great Lesson, to be Meek and Lowly in heart as *he* was, and as we must be if we will be his Disciples. Always remembering, that the more Humble we are, still the more Christian we are, and that the lower we sink now in *Humility*,

D d 3

406 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

mility, the higher we shall hereafter rise in Glory.

27. For we are to consider, that there is a time coming when every Valley shall be exalted, and every Mountain and Hill shall be made Low. When he that Exalts himself shall be Abased, and he that Humbles himself shall be Exalted. When Pride shall sink down into Shame and Contempt, and Humility shall be advanced on High, and sit in Glory and Triumph. And of this, God has already given a Specimen and Pledge in the two greatest Instances of each kind. Of the Humiliation of Pride in the Fall'n Angels, and of the Exaltation of Humility in his own Son, the great Example of it; who for his voluntary Debasement of himself in the several degrees of his Humiliation upon Earth, is now advanced to the highest degree of Glory and Dignity in Heaven. And therefore says the Apostle, *wherefore God also has highly exalted him, and given him a Name above every Name, Phil. 2. 9.* He had before commended the great and wonderful *Humility* of Christ, and here he sets forth the *reward* of it, which is a proportionable Exaltation and Glory. Which must be understood chiefly as to his *Human Nature*, which was now advanced to a new Dignity which it had not before, in that as *God-Man* he was made the Prince

A Treatise concerning Humility. 407

Prince of his Church, and invested with the Supremacy of Power and Dominion over Men and Angels. Here therefore, Humility and Pride may see their Portions, and what return they may expect in the day of Recompence. God has set the Fall'n Angels for an Example on the one side, and his Son Jesus Christ for an Example on the other. He has put down those mighty ones from their high Seat, and has exalted him that was Humble and Meek. And so in proportion, will he exalt every one that Humbles himself as he did; Humility that was crown'd in the Head, shall be crown'd in the Members too; and the lower we place our selves here, the higher shall be our Seat hereafter.

28. In the mean time, the better to invite and persuade our selves to the study and practice of this great Christian Vertue, we may further consider, that Humility has the Advantage in *Grace* as well as in *Glory*. That refreshing and fructifying Dew of Heaven, which conveys a Life and Spirit to our languishing Vertues, and makes all the Plants of Righteousness here below to thrive and flourish, is apt to run most into the lower grounds, from the Hills into the Valleys, which are also best fitted to receive it, and to be enriched and made fruitful by it. The Humble

408 *A Treatise concerning Humility.*

and Meek Spirited, are those *Sheep* of Christ which *bear his Voice*, *John* 10. 27. and to such he delights to *speak*, because he finds them quiet and attentive, teachable and tractable, willing and obedient, disposed to learn his Heavenly Truths, and as ready to practice his Divine Commands, and to follow him whithersoever he shall lead them. And accordingly, he whose delight is to be with the Sons of Men, loves most to be with these ; and so leaving the Proud to the imaginations of their own Hearts, *the Meek will be guide in Judgment, and the Meek will be teach his way, Psal.* 25. 9. The Humble and Poor in Spirit have a peculiar title to the kindest and most favourable Influences of Heaven, and shall be continually watered with the Dew of it, while the Proud and High-Minded shall lye under the Imprecation of the *Mountains of Gilboa*, to be without the Blessings of Rain and Dew, and so given up to Drowth and Barrenness. There is no greater Bar against the Grace of God than Pride ; and therefore let us take heed how we put this Bar against his Grace and our own Happiness, lest as he finds us *High*, so he leaves us *Barren*, and commands his Clouds that they Rain no Rain upon us. Rather let us study and labour (for a great work it is) to bring our Minds to the Spirit and Temper of *Humility*,
which

A Treatise concerning Humility. 409

which was the temper of Christ, and is the temper of his Gospel, and which will be the temper of Heaven, which disposes us for Grace, and will bring us to Glory, where our Advancement shall answer our Humiliation, as Christ's did; and where with crown'd Heads, but still humble Hearts, we shall Magnifie and Rejoyce in God, be well pleased that he has all the Praise and the Glory, and think it Happiness enough for us, that we have the Honour to give it him in Eternal Anthems and Allelujahs, and in that most just Doxology, *Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give the Praise.* AMEN.

F I N I S.

**BOOKS Printed for and Sold by S.
Manship, at the Ship in Cornhill, near
the Royal-Exchange.**

A Collection of Miscellanies, consisting of Poems, Essays, Discourses and Letters, in large 8vo.

Theory and Regulation of Love. A Moral Essay in Two Parts ; to which are added, Letters Philosophical and Moral, between the Author and Dr. More. The Second Edition, in 8vo.

Practical Discourses upon the Beatitudes of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Vol. I. and II. containing a Discourse concerning Worldly and Divine Wisdom, concerning Righteous and Unrighteous Judgment, concerning Religion, Singularity, concerning the Excellency of Praise and Thanksgiving, the importance of a Religious Life, considered from the happy conclusion of it, concerning Heavenly Mindedness, of submission to Divine Providence, concerning the folly of Covetousness, concerning the consideration of God and of the Divine Presence ; concerning doing God's Will on Earth as it is in Heaven. The Fourth Edition, in large 8vo. Price both together, 6 s. Pra-

Books Sold by S. Manſhip.

Practical Diſcourſes upon ſeveral Divine Subjects. Vol. III. and IV. in large 8vo.

An Account of Reason and Faith, in Relation to the Miſteries of Chriſtianity, in 8vo.

Letters Philoſophical Moral and Divine, to the Reverend Mr. *John Norris*, with his Anſwers, in 8vo.

Treatiſes upon ſeveral Subjects, formerly Printed ſingly, now Collected into one Volume, viz. 1. Reason and Religion. 2. Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life. 3. The charge of Schiſm continued. 4. Two Treatiſes concerning Divine Light. 5. Spiritual Counſel, or the Fathers Advice to his Children.

An Eſſay towards the Theory of the Ideal or Intelligible World ; in II. Vol. 8vo. pr. 11 s.

All written by the Reverend Mr. John Norris, Reſtor of Bemerton near Sarum.

A Treatiſe of Sacramental Covenanting with Chriſt, ſhewing the Ungodly their Contempt of Chriſt, in their Contempt of their Sacramental Covenanting with Chriſt ; with a Preface chiefly deſign'd for the ſatisfaction of Diſſenters, and to exhort all Men to Peace and Unity. The Fourth Edition. 8vo. Price Bound 2 s.

An Explanation of the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, with the
Adi-

Books Sold by S. Manship.

The Compleat Horseman, or the perfect Farrier, in two Parts, Abridg'd from the Folio ; done into *English* by Sir Will. Hope, in 8vo. Bound 5 s.

The Anatomy of Human Bodies improved, according to the Circulation of the Blood, and all the modern Discovery. Publickly demonstrated at the Theatre by *Monsieur Dionis*, Chief Surgeon to the late Dauphiness, and the present Dutches of *Burgundy*. Translated from the Third Edition, Corrected and Enlarged by the Author, with an Ample Dissertation upon the Nature of Generations, and several new Systems, with Figures of all the parts of the Body. In 8vo. large. Price Bound 6 s.

The Reformed Kalendar, or an Essay towards our altering our *Julian Kalendar*, to a nearer Conformity with Truth and our Christian *Æra*, than hath been yet done by the *Gregorian* Regulation, with an Example thereof for the Year 1704. Price 6 d.

Doctor *Beveridges* Sermon on the *Common-Prayer*. Price 3 d.

Spiritual Council, or the Fathers Advice to his Children. Price 3 d.

Of Religious Discourse in Common-Conversation. Price 3 d.

Both by the Reverend Mr. *John Norris*.

The Christian Monitor, Part the First. Containing an Exhortation to an Holy Life. Pr. 3 d.

The

Books Sold by S. Manſhip.

The Christian Monitor, Part II. Containing an earnest Exhortation to a Holy Dying, with proper Directions, in order to a timely Repentance. price 3 *d.* or 20 *s.* a hundred to those that are Charitably disposed.

A Charge of Heresy maintained against Mr. *Dodwell's* late Epistolary Discourse, concerning the Mortality of the Soul. By way of Address to the Clergy of the Church of *England*. By *Edmund Chishull*, B. D. Late Chaplain at *Smyrna*, and Fellow of C. C. C. *Oxon.*

A Paraphrase and Comment upon the Epistles and Gospels, appointed to be used by the Church of *England*, on all Sundays and Holidays throughout the whole Year. By *George Stanhope*, D. D. Dean of *Canterbury*, and Chaplain in ordinary to Her Majesty ; in Three Volumes, which compleat the whole Year.

The whole Critical Works of Monsieur *Rapin* in Two Volumes. Newly Translated into *English* by several Hands.

Dumont's New Voyages to the *Levant*,

Labontous Voyages to North *America*. 2 Vol. in 8^{vo}.

The *Roman* History from the first settlement of the Empire, in 4 Volumes. The two first written by Mr. *Echard*. 8^{vo}.

The Solitary or Cartusian Gardner, in two Parts, 8^{vo}.

The